THE NATURE OF CHRIST

WILLIAM MARSHALL

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THE NATURE OF CHRIST

Personal and Press Notices.

'I thank my dear friend, the Rev. William Marshall, for his new contribution to the honour and glory of our Lord Christ, and congratulate him on the lucid and straightforward simplicity with which he represents and confirms the New Testament Revelation of His Godhood in Manhood before the worlds were created, and now, and for evermore. It is very irrational and unphilosophical to contemplate God as merely a subjective Essence or Spirit; He is also, in the Son, the first Supreme and Causative Objective Form. Without the natural sun in the bosom of the infinite ether, it would be objectless and powerless; and God, apart from the only-begotten Son, could neither be the Father of human races nor the Creator of the worlds. I commend to readers, therefore, Mr. Marshall's valuable testimony.'—*Rev. John Pulsford, D.D.*

'The New Christology is summed up by the author in four propositions, which are widely different from those usually held by theologians; and yet they deserve consideration at their hands. We must leave detailed criticism to professional periodicals, and merely say that this is a notable book.'—*The Aberdeen Free Press.*

'There is no doubt that this is a most interesting and scholarly book.'—*The Rock.*

'A volume which will be welcomed by devout students of Scripture, to whom the simplification and humanisation of theology is a consummation devoutly to be wished.'—*The Christian World.*

'Throughout, it is richly suggestive.'—*The Kilmarnock Standard.*

'The reader will be refreshed and stimulated by the freshness and fervour of Mr. Marshall's masterly volume.'—*The Christian Leader.*

'A very suggestive book: its perusal will amply reward thoughtful Christians.'—*The Christian.*

'This is unquestionably a deeply interesting work. If it does (fulfil its purpose) it will be an epoch-making volume, for which the Church and the world will have good reason to give thanks. We cordially commend the work to the perusal of all earnest seekers after truth.'—*The Ayrshire Post.*

THE

NATURE OF CHRIST

OR

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE SCRIPTURES
AND OF CHRIST

BY

REV. WILLIAM MARSHALL

ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ.
μορφὴν δούλου.
Phil. ii. 6, 7

THIRD EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

THIS book has been out of print for nearly three years, but from time to time it is still being inquired after and, therefore, we now issue a new edition.

Some time ago we published a little work on *The Testimony of the Sacred Writings Concerning the Nature of Jehovah-Jesus;* but we have permitted it also to pass out of print, in order that a few of its most important passages may find embodiment in this larger work, that thereby our views of *The Nature of Christ* may be made all the more forceful and convincing.

It has been persistently declared for years past that a wide demand is being made by the intelligent public for *a New Theology*, and certain preachers and teachers have hastened to meet and satisfy the demand. The Theology which some have provided is an extraordinary mixture—compounded as it is of perverted Scriptures, pagan philosophies, scientific speculations, and the tentative conclusions of the modern mind. In proof of this, let the reader obtain and study the published proceedings of the "Convention" held at Penmaenmawr in August last, entitled, *New Theology and Applied Religion.* And

along with these let him also read *The New Theology* by Rev. R. J. Campbell, and his recently issued volume of sermons. From these he may learn how vastly different the New Theology is from the Old, and also how well fitted it is to lead all its believers *away from Christ*, as the only-begotten Son of the eternal Father and the only Saviour of sinners.

This book, on the Nature of Christ, lays a broad and deep foundation for a New Theology. It is a Christology which has been obtained—not by perverting and rejecting the revealed Word of God, and putting in its place the superficial and changeful opinions of men, but—by a careful and long-continued study of the Scriptures themselves, and an honest interpretation of their contents as they are simply and consistently set before us in the grand old Book. It is not by departing from their true and well-tested teachings that any reliable Theology can rightly be constructed, but rather by a loyal acceptance of 'the Truth as it is in Jesus,' and by following the guidance of the Holy Spirit in searching into 'the deep things of God.' These two duties we have long and earnestly endeavoured to fulfil, and therefore we humbly believe that the following pages truly set forth, in clear and simple words, *the real Christology of the Scriptures and of the Christ.* We humbly commend them to the thoughtful consideration of our readers, and also to the blessing of God.

1, Grove Road,
Norwich,
January, 1908.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE subject of this book is the Nature of Christ, in His pre-Incarnate, Incarnate, and Glorified states. Of all conceivable themes this surely is of primal and perennial importance—not to Christians only, but also to all men—because it is the foundation of all real, saving, and abiding knowledge. Did not Jesus say, 'I *am* the Truth'? 'It hath pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell'—the fulness of the Godhead, the fulness of Humanity, and the fulness of Creation.

We believe that the view of Christ's nature, which has been held by the universal Church since the days of the Apostolic Fathers, is entirely erroneous; and also that a true Theology is impossible until a correct Christology has been attained. Jesus said, 'No one knoweth who the Father is *save the Son*, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him' (Luke x. 22).

But old notions of any kind, and most of all religious notions, are very difficult to dislodge from the mind. It does not matter how unscriptural they may be, or illogical, or even absurd, if only they have been believed for generations, they are reverently received by tradition from the fathers, and become what Carlyle was wont to call "fixed ideas." We have, therefore, no expectation that the teachings of this book will meet with either an immediate or a general acceptance. Many will doubtless say:

"*The world has been face to face with Christ for centuries. His majestic and yet pathetic personality is a conspicuous figure in the story of the world. It has hardly been left for this nineteenth century to give us a new view of Him.*" (Thus wrote one of our critics.)

That is how the great majority, even of the most intelligent Christians, are likely to feel and speak. Nevertheless, "Truth

WHAT DOES "FULNESS" MEAN? DOES IT MEAN EXACTLY THE SAME IN EACH CASE? IF NOT, OF WHAT WORDS IS STATEMENT?

is great, and will prevail." If our interpretation of the Christological Scriptures be correct—as we believe it to be—it will surely commend itself, as time goes on, to an ever-increasing number of patient and unprejudiced seekers for truth; and most of all to those who wish to know *Him* who is 'The Truth,' that knowing the Son they may know the Father also, 'whom to know is Life Eternal.'

CLAVADEL, DAVOS PLATZ,
SWITZERLAND,
October, 1899.

PREFACE

SOME time ago we published a book, entitled, *The Visible God, and our Relation to Him in Creation and Redemption.* The press notices were numerous and kind, as may be seen from the selections given at the end of this volume. And the personal testimonies we received were still more kind and laudatory, one of which, from an able and scholarly clergyman of the Anglican Church, may be given as a sample:

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have just finished reading your book, entitled *The Visible God*, etc. I thank God for it, and may I thank you also for the pleasure and profit I have received through your most interesting and valuable work? If I could, I would put a copy of it into the hands of all my friends. I wish every clergyman would read it."

The first and eighth chapters of that book outline a New Christology—a Christology altogether different from that which has been generally believed by the Catholic Church since the days of the so-called "Fathers"—a Christology which we believe to be not only new, but true, and of the utmost practical importance to both the Church and the world. Some of our wisest friends—who have gladly and gratefully accepted our interpretation of the Christological Scriptures, and found that it has largely made the Bible a new book to them—have expressed their regret, that it was embodied in a large volume which may possibly be read by only a comparatively small number of persons. Recognizing the force of their contention, we have given the gist of those two chapters in this new book, largely altering and adding thereto to make our work as full and perfect as we could. Of course, it would not have been difficult

greatly to expand the additional matter, because the theme of our book is one of intensest interest as well as of the greatest importance ; but we resisted the temptation, in the belief that a short and suggestive treatment would prove both more attractive and instructive to thoughtful readers than a longer and more exhaustive treatise. Not only so, but having chiefly in view devout students of the Scriptures and earnest seekers for God, and not scholars and theologians only, we have written as simply and briefly as we could. Praying and hoping that under the Divine blessing our words may become a key to many, by which they may unlock all the Scriptures which speak of the Nature of the Christ, we send forth the book.

Clavadel, Davos Platz,
Switzerland,
February, 1896.

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CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF GOD—THE FATHER

THAT we may clearly apprehend what the Scriptures tell us about the nature of the Son of God, let us try first of all to understand, with some measure of fulness, what they say about *the nature of the Father*. As *Dr. Bruce* observes in *The Humiliation of Christ* (p. 10):

"Every one who would form for himself a conception of the person of Christ must first determine his idea of God, and then bring that idea to his Christological task as one of its determining factors."

In doing this, we shall carefully eschew all mere speculations on matters about which Scripture is silent, and deal only with the great facts which have been plainly revealed in the Sacred Word.

In the beginning, God was. He is Eternal. And in that beginning which never began, He was alone. The universe had not been created, and no being, creature or thing brought into existence. As *Jacob Behmen*—the wise and far-sighted German philosopher and mystic—truly and beautifully remarks:

"The Great Spirit dwelt alone, in the uncreated Heaven of His own glory."

But though alone He was not solitary, for 'God is Love'; and Love "from eternity, must have lived a life of companionship." It cannot satisfy itself. There is a Trinity in the Unity of the Divine Being. The Triune Godhead is everywhere declared in the sacred writings, especially in the New Testament, and is usually represented by the words Father, Son and Spirit. Proof texts need not be quoted, for every intelligent reader of the Bible must be familiar with them.

What then is the "nature" of the Father? Let the Scriptures give the reply: 'God is Spirit' (John iv. 24). 'God is Light' (1 John i. 5). 'God is Love' (1 John iv. 8, 16). 'The King, eternal, incorruptible, invisible, the only God' (1 Tim. i. 17). 'Who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen nor can see' (1 Tim. vi. 16). Thoughtfully meditate for a little on these great and glorious declarations; they are sublimely grand, and charmingly suggestive.

1. '*God is Spirit.*' He is not a Spirit but the Spirit, and is Spirit only. Did not Jesus say to the Jews, 'Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form'? (John v. 37). He has neither form nor parts, and is not limited in any way whatsoever. Hence this inquiry: 'Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord' (Jer. xxiii. 24). 'In Him we live, and move, and have our being' (Acts xvii. 28). As we have shown in our work on *Nature as a Book of Symbols*, the Sky is the symbol in Nature of the Infinite Spirit. It is not a substance that can be grasped, but an infinitely extended

Ether—an ether which is everywhere, unchanging, perfectly pure, all-embracing and wholly beautiful—like the Eternal One.

"Thy omnipresent life, O God!
Through Nature's face we see;
That life in men is shed abroad,
And angels live in Thee."

2. '*God is Light.*' 'In Him is no darkness at all.' He is the God of Truth and Righteousness, the absolute Wisdom and the Holy One. 'Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name, for Thou *only* art holy.' 'If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another' (1 John i. 5-7). Glory to God in the highest:—

"The sons of ignorance and night
May dwell in the Eternal Light
Through the Eternal Love."

3. '*God is Love.*' What does this grandest of all declarations concerning the Father signify? It signifies that *He is nothing else than Love.* Love is the essence of His nature, and the element of His life. It has often been supposed that love is only one of the many attributes of Deity, but that is a mistake. All the Divine attributes are the attributes of love, just as the sevenfold hues of the rainbow are the elements of pure white light. As light contains all colours, so love enfolds all attributes. We are never told in Scripture that God is Mercy, or

Righteousness, or Holiness, or Justice, or Truth; but we are told, once and again, that He is Love. This is the All of God, and what are called His attributes or perfections are just the goings forth of His love towards His children *in different moral conditions.* For instance, What is Mercy? but love stooping down to the sinful and miserable to save and uplift them. What is Righteousness? but love declaring and establishing the right. What is Holiness? but love looking upon moral impurity with loathing and disapproval. What is Anger? but the holy indignation of love, exposing, rebuking, and destroying sin which it hates and cannot tolerate. 'Our God is a consuming fire,' just because He is Love. The perfect love seeks to burn up all that is contrary to its own nature, and which—by opposing its redemptive purpose and degrading and destroying humanity—if left alone, would turn the universe into a hell.

'*God is Love.*' What does this imply? Three things at least. And—

1. It implies a *material* and *moral* creation, in which the Divine Lover can manifest His love, and make the objects of His affection the happy partakers of His own nature, character and joy. Love, in the bosom of God, is the most fervent affection and active principle in the universe: it can neither be passive nor inactive, but must manifest itself. It is not compelled by any necessity from without, but impelled by its own nature from within. It longs for objects upon whom it may lavish its fond and tender endearments—objects capable not only of receiving,

but also of reciprocating its gracious and kindly manifestations; for love can never be satisfied with anything but love.

That God is Love, implies :—

2. *That He is the Great Father.* 'In Him is the fountain of life. He is 'the Father of spirits' (Heb. xii. 9); and therefore also, 'the God of the spirits of all flesh' (Num. xvi. 22); 'We are also His offspring' (Acts xvii. 28).

And Fatherhood involves *Motherhood.*

With profoundest reverence we approach this Holy of Holies in the Divine nature, meanwhile charging our soul to clothe itself with humility, and let its words be few. Indeed, instead of venturing to express our own thoughts on such a subject, we prefer to make use of the words of another—the beautiful and suggestive words of a recently departed saint and seer—who was led by the Divine Spirit (the great Enlightener of the human mind, and the supreme Interpreter of spiritual truth) into the knowledge and experience of 'the deep things of God.' In his *Morgenröthe, Dr. John Pulsford* has written some wonderful things about the Divine Motherhood. On page 66, he says:

"The honour due to the *finite* father and mother assumes that the lines of their descent meet in the bosom of the *Infinite*, of whom they are representative. Could they be mothers at all, or fathers at all, except from Him? We will honour our father and mother in God; for not in them, but in Him, we find both the original of their distinction and the perfectness of their unity. In glorifying and lovingly honouring Eternal Fatherhood and Motherhood in Him, we are open to the circulation in us of His life; and it shall surely go well with us all the days of His eternity and our eternity."

These are profoundly true, beautiful and suggestive words, though, we doubt not, they will appear to be very obscure and mystical to those who have not previously thought of the Motherliness of God. Let all such think of it now, and often in time to come, and the glory of the Divine Maternity will rise upon their mental and spiritual vision like the dawning of the day.

That God is Love, implies:

3. Not only Divine Fatherhood and Divine Motherhood, but also a *Divine family life.* The fatherly and motherly heart of God longed for children. It could never be satisfied with mere creatures, such as birds and beasts, but only by Moral Intelligences who could receive His love and freely give Him back their own in return. They must be able, with willing minds, joyful hearts and adoring spirits to worship Him as their God and lovingly obey Him as their Father. It was for them that the universe was created. Every orb in space, we may venture to believe, is designed for habitation. The worlds are the many mansions of the infinite palace-home of the Divine Family. That family is already very large, and will, we doubt not, be continually increased—through creation and multiplication—for evermore. The universe is boundless, and the love of God inexhaustible. There will eternally be abundance of room in the heart and home of the Divine Father for all His children; ay! and the larger His family becomes the greater will be His joy, because He is Love. The family of God was Divinely intended to be a holy, beautiful and blessed Brotherhood—a brotherhood

of true life and love; and but for the corrupting and disintegrating power of Moral Evil the whole human race would have been such a brotherhood. But sin is a great divider and bringer of discords; it alienated man from God, and has everywhere alienated men from their fellow-creatures. But 'the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.' 'God commendeth His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.' He saves every penitent believer of His gospel, reconciles the children to their Father, and then brings them progressively into harmony one with another. As the Risen, Glorified and highly Exalted Saviour and Lord, He has become the Head of a new race—the race of the regenerated and the renewed. And this new race is a new Brotherhood—a brotherhood which is Divinely intended and commanded to absorb the old corrupted and perishing race: and when this grand and glorious result is finally accomplished, then shall the Divine Renewer make 'all things new.' Positivism, Theosophy and Culture boast of the brotherhoods which they are creating in the world, but all their hopes and boastings are vain; for never can there be a real human Brotherhood without a Divine Fatherhood, nor a true family life until all men are brought into harmony in the oneness of God's own life, which is the life of love. Christianity offers to men all that Positivism, Theosophy and Culture can offer, and a great deal more—pardon, purification, peace, joy, oneness with God, harmony with one another, deliverance from the power of death and the grave, and eternal life and glory in the great Future, when God

shall rest in His love and rejoice over them with singing.

4. *God is Invisible.* The teaching of Scripture is clear and definite about this, and its statements regarding it are numerous. Take the following: 'Oh that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat! . . . Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; on the left hand when He doth work, but *I cannot behold Him;* He hideth Himself on the right hand, that *I cannot see Him*' (Job xxiii. 3, 8, 9). 'He maketh darkness His *hiding-place,* His pavilion round about Him' (Ps. xviii. 11). 'Verily, Thou art a God that *hidest* Thyself' (Isa. xlv. 15). '*No man hath seen God at any time*' (John i. 18). 'The Father Himself, who hath sent Me, hath borne witness of Me; ye have neither heard His voice at any time, *nor seen His shape*' (John v. 37). 'Not that any man hath *seen* the Father, save He who is from God; He hath seen the Father' (John vi. 46). 'Now, unto the King eternal, incorruptible, *invisible,* the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever' (1 Tim. i. 17). 'The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords: who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable, *whom no man hath seen, nor can see:* to whom be honour and power eternal' (1 Tim. vi. 15, 16). 'By faith he [Moses] forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, *as seeing Him who is invisible*' (Heb. xi. 27). '*No man hath beheld God at any time*' (1 John iv. 12). This is the uniform teaching of Divine Revelation concerning the Father,

and all its declarations are emphatic and unlimited. Neither has an enlightened reason any difficulty in accepting them, for it is not conceivable that a finite creature could behold the Infinite Spirit—a Being who must necessarily be invisible in every world and to all eternity, because of His infinitude. If God the Father could be seen, as the Divine Man is seen, there would be two visible Deities, and each in finite form; but the Infinite is without form and must therefore be invisible. When Jesus said, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God' (Matt. v. 8), He referred to *spiritual vision*, and not to bodily sight: the pure in heart see God now—see Him with the eyes of the heart. And when He said, 'Their angels do always behold the face of My Father who is in heaven' (Matt. xviii. 10), He again referred to *spiritual vision* and not to physical sight, as two things clearly show: *First*, no finite creature can see the Infinite and formless One; and *Second*, if the Father has a Form as well as the Son, and the 'Face' of His form could be seen, then *two* Gods must be visible. But this is wholly unbelievable, because Christ was and is 'the Form of God,' '*in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*'—the '*one Lord*.'

5. *God is The Great Unknown.* No created being in the universe has ever attained to a direct and immediate knowledge of the Father. Such knowledge is impossible. What saith the Scriptures? 'Behold, God is good, and we know Him not' (Job xxxvi. 26). The experience of Job is explained by the words of Jesus: 'Neither doth any know the

Father' (Matt. xi. 27). Jesus did not say that no one knoweth God *perfectly*, but that no one knoweth Him at all. To know God perfectly, is eternally impossible to all created beings. And what is the testimony of reason? *Calvin* truly says in his *Institutes* (II. xii. 1):

"Even if man had remained free from all sin, he was of too humble a condition to penetrate to God without a Mediator."

If men could have directly apprehended God, then there would have been no need for a Mediator: but 'He dwelleth in light unapproachable, whom no man hath seen *nor can see*.' He is absolutely invisible. An immediate and adequate knowledge of God through consciousness or intuition, or reasoning, or Nature, or science is impossible, and, therefore, without a Revealer, the Great Unknown must also have remained the Great Unknowable for ever. Let these truths and facts concerning the Father be kept in remembrance while we now proceed to consider the pre-Incarnate nature of the Son.

At this point, the great question naturally arises: *Who was to be the Mediator between God and men and the Revealer of the Father to His children?* Some may suppose that the Father might have been spiritually revealed to men by *the Spirit*, and that thus the Third Person in the Godhead could have become the great Mediator; but there is no ground for such a conception in the Bible. It never refers to the Divine Spirit as the 'Mediator,' nor speaks of Him as the first and immediate 'Revealer' of the Father. Take note of that. These titles are given only to the

Son: 'There is one God, one Mediator also between God and men, Himself man'—'Neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him'—'The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.' The visible Son is, and always has been, the revealer of the invisible Father; and then the Holy Spirit reveals and glorifies the Son.

"The Father cometh *in* the Son,
And *through* the Holy Ghost."

This is the order of Divine operation, in the work of Redemption; and there is no reason to suppose that it would have been different, had sin never been known and redemption never been necessary.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF THE PRE-INCARNATE SON

"If the great question for religion in the immediate future is that of the Person of Jesus, the sooner we address ourselves to it the better."—*The New Theology*, p. 69, by Rev. R. J. Campbell.

WHAT was the nature of the pre-Incarnate Son? This is a matter of transcendent interest and importance, to the consideration of which we earnestly ask the best attention of our readers. It is specially to give an answer to this question that these pages are being written. What we have already said about the nature of God, and what we may yet say regarding the nature of Man, is intended to assist the reader to apprehend the nature of Christ. What then was His nature in the beginning, *as the Creator of all things?* Once more we go to the Scriptures for the reply. They have told us clearly and definitely what is the nature of the Father, and we doubt not that with equal clearness they will also tell us what was the nature of the Son. May God help us, with entire moral simplicity, to accept the testimony which they give!

As some one has truly said:

"An unrevealed God would be simply a hypothetical being. A God revealed only in the general course of Nature would be

too distant and ambiguous to make the maximum appeal to faith and love. Moreover, if God be ethical, personal, He is but consistent with Himself in using the most potent means of coming near into loving fellowship with the race of ethical persons."

Certainly! And surely the right time for God to representatively manifest Himself to His children was at the beginning of human history, and not merely after the Incarnation when thousands of years had passed. Did not the very first of our race, in the morning of time, need a personal and *mediatorial* revelation of God as much as their posterity in after days? They were not made to sin; and had they never fallen, a visible God was a necessity to reveal the invisible God, and to act as their Teacher and Guide eternally.

Who, then, was the 'God' who so frequently appeared as '*a man*' in the patriarchal age and during the earlier period of the Jewish dispensation? He was not God the Father, 'whom no man hath seen at any time nor can see'; neither was it God the Holy Ghost, for He, too, is invisible, and has never been seen by any human being. It was God the Son, of whom Paul wrote to the Colossians: 'The Son of His love, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.' He was the Creator of all things, and the visible God who appeared to many in the Old Testament times.

Dr. Dale has written as follows (*The Atonement*, pp. 463, 464):

"St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Colossians, described our Lord Jesus Christ as 'the image of the invisible God, the first-

born of every creature.' The antithesis seems to suggest that Christ is allied—if not in the same way, yet by relations equally vital—at once with God and the created universe. In Him 'the image of the invisible God,' the actual perfections of God are revealed to the thought of the universe; and in Him 'the firstborn of all creation,' the ideal perfections of the universe are present to the thought of God. This conception of Christ's relation to the universe the Apostle proceeds to develop: 'For in Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth; visible or invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by (or through) Him and for (or unto) Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.' This remarkable passage contains St. Paul's theory of the relations between Christ and the universe: (1) Christ, 'the Firstborn,' was—if I may venture to say it—the eternal prophecy of creation. In Him the perfection and glory dwelt from eternity, which in the creation have been manifested in time. *What the creation, in its ideal perfection, was to be to the Father, had from eternity found a transcendent expression in Christ.* (2) When, at last, the universe was created, Christ was the very ground and root of its existence; it was the revelation of His thought; 'its life was in Him.' (3) Nor was the creative act the immediate act of the Father; the Divine power—if we may use words which only remotely suggest the truth—travelled through Christ: all things were created 'through Him.' (4) Nor, again, was the universe created for itself: its final cause, its ultimate end, and its consummate perfection are to be found in Christ: all things were created 'for Him' or 'unto Him.' (5) And, apart from Him, the universe, as a universe, could not continue in existence; it would fall into disorder and sink back into chaos, for 'in Him all things consist.'"

This is a very thoughtful and informing passage, and yet, we venture to say, that it is not a correct commentary on the magnificent words of Paul. The apostle in this passage does not speak of '*the eternal Son*' as the Creator of the universe, but of the Son

as '*the image of the invisible God, and the firstborn of all creation*,' for '*in Him* were all things created,' etc. The apostle lays the emphasis on 'the firstborn of all creation,' and the preacher on 'the eternal Christ.' So long as 'the eternal Christ' was only Divine, He created nothing; but after He became 'the image of the invisible God and the firstborn of all creation,' then, says Paul, 'all things were created *in* Him,' '*by* Him,' and '*for* Him,' and 'in Him all things *consist*,' or hold together. It was thus that Dr. Dale missed the great and important thought of Paul, and substituted an idea which has no place in this very wonderful and most instructive Scripture (Col. i. 15-17).

In *The New Theology* (p. 5) the Rev. R. J. Campbell tells us that—

> "The new Theology holds that we know nothing, and can know nothing, of the Infinite Cause whence all things proceed, except as we read Him in His universe and in our own souls. It is the immanent God with whom we have to do, and if this obvious fact is once firmly grasped, it will simplify all our religious conceptions, and give us a working faith."

In these words there is no notice taken of 'the image of the invisible God,' by whom all things were created. His personal existence and frequent visible appearances in the olden times are simply ignored, and the "obvious fact" to which Mr. Campbell refers is not obvious at all. If man had been left to read God only in the universe and in his own soul, he could never have attained to any real and satisfying knowledge of God at all. 'The world through wisdom knew not God' (1 Cor. i. 21).

THE CREATORS OF THE UNIVERSE AND OF MAN.

The so-called Apostles' Creed begins thus, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth." To all who make use of the Prayer-book in public worship these words are familiar; and in all likelihood, if the question were put to any of them, "Who created all things?" the answer would be, "God the Father Almighty." But all through the New Testament the Son is stated to have been the Creator. What do we read? 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. *All things were made by Him;* and without Him was not any thing made that hath been made' (John i. 1-3). 'His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, *by whom also He made the worlds*.' The Father said unto the Son: 'Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands' (Heb. i. 2, 10).

Now, if the Father created all things, as the Creed truly declares, and if the New Testament affirms that all things were brought into being by the Son, how are these apparent discrepancies to be reconciled? Thoughtfully consider the following declarations:

'*My Father worketh even until now, and I work. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father doing; for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth*' (John v. 17, 19, 20).

We are taught by these very remarkable verses that both the Father and the Son are Workers, and also that they do the same things. The former is the originator, and the latter the imitator. The relationship of architect and builder will illumine the meaning here. The Father created all things in plan and purpose, and the Son carried them into practical embodiment. If we regard the universe as the house of God, we may say that—

God was the Architect;
The *Lord* God the Builder;
The Holy Spirit the Beautifier.

Concerning the last of the Holy Three, it is written: 'By His Spirit the *heavens* are garnished,' or beautified (Job xxvi. 13). And of the spring-time of every year it is written: 'Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit; they are created: and Thou renewest the face of the *earth*' (Ps. civ. 30).

The Son said, regarding Himself: 'The Lord formed Me in the beginning of His way, the first of His works of old; . . . and when He appointed [or marked out] the foundations of the earth, then I was by Him as a master workman' (Prov. viii. 22, 29). And Paul says: 'He was the image of the Invisible God, *the firstborn of all creation*,' in whom, by whom, and for whom, all things were created.

1. He made man *in His own image*. In doing this He acted for the Godhead; therefore He said, 'Let *us* make man in *our* image.' Elohim is plural. If the Incarnate Jesus was the embodied Trinity, 'in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,'

so also was the Elohim—the Creator. Man was created with a tripartite nature—spirit and soul and body—and was, therefore, an image of Him who was 'the image of the Invisible God.' And as another has truly said: "The image of God, therefore, does not necessarily include moral and spiritual perfection. . . . *It belongs to His nature, not to His character.* Man was made in the image of God, because He is a free, intelligent, self-conscious, and moral personality."

2. He also made man in His own '*likeness.*' Likeness always refers to form and features, and therefore to that which is visible. The very word implies *a visible form* in the creating God, and must therefore refer to the Son and not to the Father. The creature was formed in the likeness of his Creator, and by that fact we have the convincing proof that 'the Image of the Invisible God' was Divine Man. As was the Creator, so was the creature; and *vice versa*, so far as 'likeness' was concerned. No wonder that the Psalmist exclaimed: 'Thou hast made him but little lower than God, and crownest him with glory and honour.' If the first man had not fallen under the power of moral evil, his Creator would never have required to become his Redeemer, nor be Incarnated 'in flesh and blood.'

THE FALL

Had the human race been brought into existence *by the method of evolution*, and if wrong-doing, either as selfishness or lawlessness, or both, had been a neces-

sity of their development and progress, then the God of holiness and love would have been the fountain of moral evil, and the primal source of all the wickedness and misery of humanity. Or if, on the other hand, sin was not a necessity, how comes it to pass that all men have sinned? 'There is none righteous; no, not one;' and all human beings are more or less conscious of the fact. If there had been no federal Head of the race and no solidarity in the human family, then surely many individuals might have resisted temptation to do evil because it was morally wrong. The very universality of sin points back to a Fall—a fall which polluted the fountain of moral being in the first transgressors, and a fall which, by the law of heredity, entailed moral corruption and a tendency to do evil in their offspring. When the fountain was polluted, the stream which flowed from it also became impure. A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean.

If man was formed, not by a process of evolution, but *by a creative act*, it was not possible for the Lord God to make him a sinful being, for that also would have made Him the author of sin. Neither has He ever created a moral personality in the possession of positive holiness to whom a fall into sin was not possible. Therefore the first man, though innocent, was not holy; and if moral character was to be formed and developed within him, his free-will must be tested by a Divinely ordained law. A moral being must be morally free; and his freedom shall never be taken away from him. The testing law was of the simplest and most natural kind, and was

imposed by Him who had every right to declare it. It ought to have been lovingly and joyfully obeyed by the newly created pair, and, had it been so, they would have risen up out of a negative into a positive holiness, and commenced an endless progress in knowledge and goodness, and in holiness and likeness to God. Being parents of a family race, their posterity would have inherited the blissful results of their obedience and followed their example. But they voluntarily chose to disobey the Divine command, and thereby involved both themselves and their offspring in the results of moral evil. Their lawlessness did not entail personal *guilt* upon their children, but it tainted them with the virus of moral corruption, out of which every possible evil might flow.

And the result of sin did not only corrupt humanity, but also went out into *the material world*, and blighted every growing thing and every living creature. This also was a natural result, for man and woman, as the king and queen of Nature, had dominion over all things on earth, and when they fell their kingdom fell with them. Hence we read, 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake'; and 'We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain with us until now.' As a poet has said:

"The earth is fallen from its high estate,
With man it fails and dies;
No more it sits beside the morning gate
In converse with the skies.

"The corse of Beauty taints the stifling air,
The Eden trees are dead;
And the foul odours of the sepulchre
O'er isle and ocean spread.

"O earth ! O man ! how desolate ye are—
Weep, weep, for ye decay ;
The smoke of evil from your fallen star
Obscures the light of day."

In his exposition of Genesis, the Rev. Dr. Maclaren says, on p. 10 :

"Man had an Eden, and lost it. I take the Fall to be a historical fact. To all who accept the authority of Scripture, no words are needed beyond the simple statement before us ; but we gather up the signs that are on the wide fields of the world's history, and narrower experience of individuals, that such a fall has been. Look at the condition of the world : its degradation, its savagery, all its pining myriads, all its untold millions who sit in darkness and the shadow of death. Will any man try to bring before him the actual state of the heathen world, and, retaining his belief in a God, profess that these men are what God meant men to be ? It seems to me that the present condition of the world is not congruous with the idea that men are in their primitive state ; and if this is what God meant men for, then I see not how the dark clouds which rest on His wisdom and His love are to be lifted off. Then, again —if the world had not had a Fall in its history, then we must take the lowest condition as the one from which all have come. And is that idea capable of defence ? Do we see anywhere signs of an upward process going on now ? Have we any experience of a tribe raising itself ? Can you catch anywhere a race in the act of struggling up outside of the pale of Christianity ? Is not the history of all a history of decadence, except only where the Gospel has come in to reverse the process ? But passing from this : What mean the experiences of the individual—these longings, this hard toil, the sorrows ? How comes it that man alone on earth, manifestly meant to be leader, lord, etc., seems but cursed with a higher nature that he may know greater sorrows, and raised above the beasts in capacity that he may sink below them in woe, this capacity only leading to a more exquisite susceptibility to a more various as well as more poignant misery ? Whence come the contrarieties and discordance in his nature ? It seems to me

that all this is best explained as the Bible explains it, by saying—(1) Sin has done it; (2) sin is not part of God's original design, but man has fallen; (3) sin had a personal beginning. There have been human beings who were pure, able to stand, but free to fall. It seems to me that that explanation is more in harmony with the facts of the case, and finds more response in the unsophisticated instinct of man than any other." (Note A at the end of the book.)

And now the great problem arises, *How did the Son reveal and declare the Father?* To this question many might reply, 'He revealed Him *by the works of His hands.*' Granted, but was the material Creation an adequate Revelation of God? It was brought into existence by the Son, for 'all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made' (John i. 3). A wonderfully beautiful manifestation of the Godhead it is, faithfully displaying the Divine nature, character and purpose up to the point the working Creator intended that it should. Is God wise?—it reveals His wisdom? Is He beneficent?—it displays His goodness. Is He just?—it exhibits and executes His justice. Is He altogether lovely?—it manifests His loveliness. As some one has beautifully said:

"All things Thy presence, Lord, declare,
Through earth and heaven above;
The vail which makes the world so fair
Is woven by Thy love.

"To loving eyes Thou dost unveil,
Thine attributes Divine;
In every flower that decks the vale,
Thy spirit hath its shrine."

His graciousness is everywhere visible to the seeing eye and the observant mind, in all the laws and operations of Nature. It shines in the sun, and sparkles like a gem on the bosom of every star. It blooms in the flowers, and glitters in every dewdrop. It breathes in the woods and forests, and whispers in every breeze. We hear it in all the voices of Nature —in the murmur of the rill, in the melody of the river, in the anthem of the sea, and in the song of every bird. We see it in all the splendours by which we are everywhere overshadowed and surrounded— in the glories of the firmament by day and by night, in the ever-changing scenery of the clouds, and in the marvellous panorama of the circling seasons of the year. Thompson spoke truly when he exclaimed:

"The rolling year, O God, is full of Thee."

Nature is, indeed, a glorious revelation of the Father! But mark this: no sinful human being has ever been able thus to interpret Nature, who has not been Divinely enlightened by the written Revelation of God. In our work on *Nature as a Book of Symbols* (pp. 76-78), we have said:

"It is only the spiritually minded man who can read and interpret Nature spiritually, and even he is able to do so only in proportion as he studies her in the light of the Bible, and regards her as a great book of symbols revealing the mind and will of God. He learns to see in all her changeful phenomena and changeless laws far higher beauties and greater marvels than are visible to the artist and poet, the philosopher and man of science. They have only physical *sight* and intellectual *out*sight, but he obtains, and with ever-increasing *in*sight, the profoundest apprehension of created things. They see only the varied forms of matter, and recognize the hidden forces by

which these forms are fashioned and governed; but he passes through the outer sphere of phenomena and the inner sphere of law into the inmost sphere of life, where he finds—through spiritual knowledge and a reasonable faith—that all Nature's laws are gathered up into the hand of the Eternal Lawgiver and into the unity of an unchanging love."

All this is true, as any intelligent and thoughtful person may readily recognize who considers the matter. Men—like Tyndal, Darwin, and Huxley—who foolishly refused to become believing and devout students of Scripture and humble disciples of Jesus Christ (the wisest of all the Teachers of mankind), do not find in Nature a revelation of God, but only a great, grinding, material machine, fashioned by an unknown Force, and governed by laws of necessity. It is also true that no *nation* of mankind, without the Bible, has ever learnt from the volume of Creation to know and love the Father. Even the ancient Greeks, with all their material civilization and mental culture, recognized in Nature not a manifestation of the only living and true God, but only a Pantheon of deities—deities of their own imagining. Their conception of Nature's teachings was grotesque and false, not spiritual and true. It was reserved for Bible-reading and God-inspired Hebrew psalmists to exclaim: 'The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork.' . . . 'All Thy works praise Thee, O God.' . . . 'How great are Thy works, O Lord! Thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand.' . . . 'Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work: I will triumph in the works of

Thy hands.' But now, *take note of this*: even though humanity had never been corrupted by the degrading, destructive, and damning power of Moral Evil, and had been able to learn from Nature all that she was capable of teaching regarding God, yet she could never have become to men an adequate and satisfying revelation of the Father. And why? *Because no person's work can ever truly and fully reveal the person.* An artist can never be thoroughly known from his pictures, nor a sculptor from his statues, nor an architect from the buildings he designs. And if this be true of men, it must be still more true of God. All His works are full of Himself, and reveal Him in measure, showing forth, as they do, His wisdom and skill, power and goodness. But while they reveal, they also conceal, for they veil the face of His glory.

And if the *works* of God cannot fully reveal Him, *neither can His Word.* The written Word of God reveals more of God than His works, because 'He has magnified His Word above all His name.' But *the written Word* is neither the first, nor the fullest, nor the final revelation of God.

It is the chief glory of the Bible that it is a revelation of *the Personal Word*, from whom it derives all its significance and force. *The Son of God*—AS THE GOD-MAN—*is the All in All of the Scriptures.* They are as full of Christ as the firmament is full of stars, and He only is the adequate and perfectly satisfying revelation of the Father. As Paul says, 'God hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God *in the face of Jesus*

Christ' (2 Cor. iv. 6). This is true now, and it was equally true in the beginning of human history. No *author*, either human or Divine, can ever be rightly known by his *writings*. Neither Nature nor the Bible could adequately reveal God or manifest the Father to His children. Let this truth be clearly apprehended, and what is the conclusion to which it forces us? It is this: that to the first members of the human family, as much as to ourselves, *a Personal Revelation of God was an absolute necessity*, without whom the Father must have remained the Great Unknown. The words of Christ have ever been true, and shall be true for ever, 'No one cometh unto the Father *but by Me*' (John xiv. 6). He is the Alpha as well as the Omega of all things—'The beginning of the creation,' the Head of the human race, and the Lamb slain in the Divine purpose before the foundation of the world.

How then was this Personal Revelation to be made? How could the Son make known the Father? We here stand face to face with a question of the very greatest magnitude—a question to which we beg our readers to give for a little their most earnest thought and undivided attention. If our apprehension of Scripture teaching on this point should be mistaken, the deductions we draw therefrom may also be mistaken; but if our conclusion is correct here, then all our conclusions in relation to what follows are also likely to be right. This then is a crucial point, which ought to receive the most careful consideration.

Again, then, we inquire, *How was the Son to reveal*

the Father? And we answer, *In no other way than by Personal and visible manifestation.* If the Son only could know the Father, it was also and equally true that only the Father could know the Son. Jesus said so. Mark His words, 'No one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father' (Matt. xi. 27); therefore, no mere creature could ever know either Father or Son as Persons of the Godhead. Being equally Divine, they were also equally unknown and *unknowable.* If no man can 'see' the Father, or 'know' the Father, neither could any man see the Son, or know the Son, if the Son also, like the Father, was God, and God only. In *The Divinity of our Lord* (p. 56) the late *Dr. Liddon* says: "St. Augustine strenuously insists upon the Scriptural truth of the Invisibility of God as God. The Son therefore, as being truly God, was by nature as invisible as the Father." No intelligent person, we think, can fairly consider the matter, and come to any other conclusion than that the Son, as a Divine Being, was invisible. *Hence it was not possible for the Son,* AS GOD, *to manifest the Father.* Take note of that. How could a purely Divine Being, 'reveal' or 'declare' or *manifest* a Being who is purely Divine? Such a manifestation is not conceivable. As the Revealer of the Father, the Son required to be not only God, but also Man, and for these all-sufficient reasons—the Divine cannot manifest the Divine, and the human can only apprehend the Human. In other words, a being *less* than God could not reveal God, neither could a Being *only* Divine reveal the Infinite Father to His finite children. Therefore

the Son became '*the image of the invisible God*,' and '*the firstborn of all creation*.' This is a truth to which the attention of Christians has never been sufficiently called, has never, indeed—so far as we know—been called at all; and yet there is no truth of greater speculative interest and practical value revealed in the Bible. *Mediatorship* between the Infinite Father and His finite children was an absolute necessity—a necessity which did not arise either out of sin or the need of redemption, but out of creaturehood itself. And because a Mediator stands between two parties, and is the Representative of both, He must necessarily partake of the nature of each. 'There is one God, and one Mediator also between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus' (1 Tim. ii. 5). These words are in the New Testament, but they might just as well have found a place in the Old Testament, if only the Jewish people had as clearly apprehended the Mediatorship of their Jehovah as did the Apostle Paul of his Saviour and Lord. Before creation, and for mediatorial ends, the Divine Son became the Divine Man, to represent God to men and men to God. *The Creator was Mediator;* and would have continued to be such eternally, but for the entrance of sin into the world. It was just here that the Apostolic Fathers failed to grasp the truth, because they believed that the Son of God was only Divine until He became Incarnate. If it be true, as the Scriptures tell us, that 'No man hath seen God at any time nor can see Him,' then we again inquire, Who was the Lord God, the 'I am,' the 'Jehovah,' who so frequently appeared to the patriarchs and

others in the ancient times, and spake with them face to face as a man with his friend? The declarations of Jesus regarding Himself are wonderful: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was born I Am.' 'I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for except ye believe that I Am, ye shall die in your sin' (John viii. 24, 58). These are glorious truths which the Christian Church does not yet clearly apprehend, and yet they are at the very core of Divine revelation.

Let us go to the grand old Book and learn what it teaches concerning the visible God.

SELECTED SCRIPTURES

'The man and his wife *hid* themselves from the *presence* of the Lord God among the trees of the garden' (Gen. iii. 8). 'The Lord *appeared* unto Abram, and said: Unto thy seed will I give this land; and there builded he an *altar* unto the Lord, who *appeared* unto him' (Gen. xii. 7). 'And Hagar called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou art a God that seest; for she said, Have I also even here looked after Him that seeth me?' or, as it might be rendered: 'Thou art *God, visible to me*' (Gen. xvi. 13). 'And God *appeared* unto him [Jacob] again, when he came from Padanaram, and blessed him. . . . *And God went up from him*, in the *place* where He spake with him; and Jacob set up a *pillar* in the place *where He talked with him*' (Gen. xxxv. 9, 13, 14). 'Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty *appeared* unto me at Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me *there*' (Gen. xlviii. 3). 'THE LORD SPAKE UNTO MOSES FACE TO FACE, AS A MAN SPEAKETH UNTO HIS FRIEND' (Exod. xxxiii. 11). 'Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, *and took in his hand two tables of stone.* And the Lord *descended* in the cloud, and *stood with him there*' (Exod. xxxiv. 4, 5). '*The Lord delivered unto me the two tables of stone*, written with the finger of God, even the tables of the

covenant' (Deut ix. 10, 11). 'I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, *but now mine eye seeth Thee;* wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes' (Job xlii. 5, 6). 'Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel: *whose goings forth have been from of old, from ancient days*' (Mic. v. 2).

These are extraordinary verses, and they all agree in declaring two great and glorious facts: First, that the Lord God was a *visible Being;* and, second, that He became *known* (more or less familiarly) to all the men and women to whom He *appeared,* and with whom He *talked* and communed. Again we ask, Who was the Person who thus acted all along the course of Old Testament times, though chiefly in the days of the patriarchs and in the earliest period of Israel's national existence? He was not the unknown and invisible God to whom we have referred in the previous section, 'whom no man hath seen, nor can see'; and yet *He was Divine.* Take special note of the points which follow.

1. *He was God—the Lord God Almighty.*

'When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord *appeared* to Abram, and said unto him: *I am the Almighty God,* walk before Me and be thou perfect. . . . And Abram fell on his face, *and God talked with him.* . . . And He left off *talking* with him, and *God went up from Abraham*' (Gen. xvii. 1, 3, 22). 'And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen *God face to face,* and my life is preserved' (Gen. xxxii. 30). 'And God said unto him, Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name; . . . and God said unto him, *I am God Almighty*' (Gen. xxxv. 10, 11). 'God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, *I am the Jehovah:* and *I appeared* unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto

Jacob, *as God Almighty*, but by My name *Jehovah* I was not known to them' (Exod. vi. 2, 3). 'And Moses *hid his face*, for he was afraid *to look upon God*. . . . And God said unto Moses, *I Am That I Am*. and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you. And God said, moreover, unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: *The Lord God of your fathers*, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, *hath sent me unto you:* this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations' (Exod. iii. 6, 14, 15). 'Then went up into the mount of Sinai Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and *they saw the God of Israel:* and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heaven for clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: *and they beheld God*, and did eat and drink' (Exod. xxiv. 9-11). 'And now, O *Lord* God, *Thou art* GOD, and Thy words are true' (2 Sam. vii. 28).

2. *The Lord God had a Form.*

'Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses. They said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only with Moses? hath He not spoken also with us? And the Lord heard. . . . And the Lord spoke suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tent of meeting; and they three came out. And the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud, *and stood in the door of the tent*, and called Aaron and Miriam; and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make known Myself unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful, in all Mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even manifestly, and not in dark speeches; AND THE FORM OF THE LORD SHALL HE BEHOLD: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?' (Num. xii. 1-8).

'Who being originally *in the form of God*'—*ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων* (Phil. ii. 6). These words refer to the Lord God of the Old Testament; and

the term *ὑπάρχων* (as Bishop Lightfoot acknowledges) "denotes *prior* existence, but not necessarily *eternal* existence." It does not go back to the eternal beginning which never began, but only to the period before creation, when the Divine Son of the Divine Father became '*The Image of the Invisible God*,' and as such was '*The Firstborn of all creation*,' or of every creature (Col. i. 15).

3. *The Form of the Lord God was not Angelic.*

All the unfallen angels have forms, as the Scriptures abundantly testify; and their forms are not greatly dissimilar from those of human beings. Hence they are frequently called 'men' both in the Old Testament and in the New. Take a few examples:

'Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked; and lo! three *men* stood by him . . . and [two of] the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom; and Abraham went with them, to bring them on the way. . . . And there came *two angels* to Sodom at even' (Gen. xviii. 2, 16, and xix. 1). 'Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the *man* Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and said: O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding' (Dan. ix. 21, 22). 'They entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, *two men* stood by them in shining garments' (Luke xxiv. 3, 4).

It is evident from these passages of Scripture that the nature and form of angels and men are very much alike; and yet they are different. The Lord God was often called a Man (as we shall presently see), but not an angel.

In *our Lord's Divinity* (p. 57), the late Dr. Liddon quoted St. Augustine as follows:

"If the Son appeared to the patriarchs, *He appeared through the intermediate agency of a created being* who represented Him, and through whom He spoke and acted." . . . "St. Augustine warns us against attempting to say positively *which of the Divine Persons manifested Himself*, in this or that instance, to patriarchs or prophets, except where some remarkable indications determine our conclusions very decisively. The general doctrine of this great teacher—that the Theophanies were not direct appearances of a Person in the Godhead, but self-manifestations of God through a created being—had been hinted at by some earlier Fathers, and was insisted on by contemporary and later writers of the highest authority." [The italics are ours.]

This extraordinary idea finds no support in the Scriptures. The Divine Father and the Holy Ghost were never seen by any created being, and He who appeared so frequently to men and women in the olden days was not an angel, but the Lord God Himself. The proof of this is found in many Scriptures. Take the following:

'*The angel of the Lord* called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said, *By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord*,' etc. (Gen. xxii. 15, 16). '*The angel of God* said unto me in a dream, Jacob! and I said, Here am I.' . . . '*I am the God of Bethel.*' . . . 'There wrestled *a man* with him, until the dawning of the day. . . . I have seen *God* face to face' (Gen. xxxi. 11, and xxxii. 24, 30).

These passages prove that 'the Angel of God' was not '*an*' *Angel*, and that the visible God was 'a man.' But though He was not a created Angel, He was yet '*the Angel of God*.' And why? Because *angel* means *messenger*, and as the Messenger of the

Most High He was *officially* known as 'the Angel of the Lord.' 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple, even *the Messenger of the Covenant* whom ye delight in' (Mal. iii. 1). The Angel of the Lord was *the covenant-keeping God.*

4. *The Form of the Lord God was Human.*

'*The Lord appeared unto Abraham* in the plains of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, *three men* stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed him toward the ground, and said, *My Lord*, if now I have found favour in Thy sight, pass not away, I pray Thee, from Thy servant' (Gen. xviii. 1-3).

When the patriarch saw the Lord and the two angels, and went to them, how was it that he did not speak to the three, but only to the One? Because he knew the One, and did not know the other two. He had already *seen* the Lord God in Ur of the Chaldees (Acts vii. 2), and therefore he now spoke only to Him, and called Him '*My Lord.*' This was not a title expressive of mere respect, but an acknowledgment of Deity, for did not Abraham, on the same occasion, call Him 'the Judge of all the earth'?

'Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled *a man* with him until the breaking of the day. . . . *I have seen God face to face*, and my life is preserved' (Gen. xxxii. 24, 30). 'It came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood *a man* over against him with his sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went unto him, and said, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said

unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Put off thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so' (Josh. v. 13-15). 'The angel of the Lord came and *sat under the terebinth* which was in Ophrah that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and save Israel from the hand of Midian: have not I sent thee? And Gideon said, Alas, *O Lord God!* forasmuch as I have seen *the angel of the Lord* face to face. And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die. Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah-shalom (the Lord is peace): unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites' (Judges vi. 11, 14, 22-24).

(Read the whole of this chapter in Judges.)

'The woman came and told her husband, saying, *A man of God* came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of the angel of God, very terrible; and I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name. . . . Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let *the man of God* whom Thou did send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. And God hearkened unto the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. And the woman made haste, and ran, and told her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the *man* hath appeared unto me that came unto me the other day. And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the *man*, and said unto him, *Art thou the man that spakest to the woman? And he said, I am.* And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. What shall be the manner of the child, and what shall be his work? And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman, let her beware. She may not eat of anything that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe. And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall

have made ready a kid for thee. And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt make ready a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord. For Manoah knew not that he was the angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour? And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore askest thou after my name, seeing it is wonderful? So Manoah took the kid with the meal offering, and offered it upon the rock unto the Lord: and the angel did wondrously, and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. Manoah and his wife looked on, and fell on their faces to the ground. But the angel did no more appear to Manoah or to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, *because we have seen God*' (Judg. xiii.). 'The angel of the Lord was both God and man. As I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, the heavens were opened and I (Ezekiel) saw visions of *God*. . . . And above the firmament was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and on the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a *man* [God-Man] upon it above. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. *This was the appearance of the glory of the likeness of the Lord.* And when I saw it, I fell upon my face' (Ezek. i. 1, 26-28). 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against *the man* that is *My fellow*, saith the Lord of hosts' (Zech. xiii. 7). 'The first man is of the earth, earthy: *the second man is the Lord from heaven*' (1 Cor. xv. 47).

These numerous and very extraordinary Scriptures are all in perfect harmony one with another, and also in the testimony which they give. What is that

testimony? It is this: *That the Jehovah of the Old Testament was the God-Man*—a testimony which was thoroughly misapprehended by the so-called Fathers of the early Christian centuries, and, under their influence, by the whole Christian Church since their time—as the theologies of all the Churches in Christendom abundantly testify. In proof, take the following:

THE OPINIONS OF THE FATHERS

In early Christian ages *the Nature of Christ* received a large amount of consideration from theologians and Christians generally. The views they held were very varied, though they frequently differed one from another only in small and subtle distinctions; but all of them, we do not hesitate to affirm, fell far short of the right apprehension of the Person of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. To prove this assertion we shall here quote the declarations of the ablest and most influential of the Fathers regarding this all-important matter, and then show where they went wrong.

Having no access at present to the writings of the Fathers, we must therefore be content to take their opinions second-hand from *Dr. Dorner's Person of the Christ*, where, doubtless, they are given with the most perfect accuracy.

Christ's nature was not brought under discussion in the age succeeding that of the apostles, and, therefore, the *earliest* Fathers say little directly concerning it. But here and there in their Epistles, etc., incidental allusions occur which indicate clearly

enough what their ideas were. *Ignatius*, for instance, says (Div. i., vol. i., p. 109):

"All the bands of the wicked were dispersed and the old Kingdom upset, *when God appeared in human form* to bring a new eternal life to light." He referred to the Incarnation.

The teaching of *Hermas* (pp. 126, 7), was this:

"Previous to His incarnation He is represented as distinct from the Father, and as exalted above the sphere of other beings. The same who founded the Church is, with the Father, the Creator of the world." . . . "*This very Divine nature* has appeared in Christ—*the man Jesus*."

And *Dr. Dorner* says regarding *Hegesippus* (142):

"We are entitled to take what he says of the universal concurrence of the Church—in which he approvingly sympathized—as a weighty testimony at least to the fact that the essentially Christian doctrine—*that of the true manhood of Christ and His Divine pre-existent being*—was, about the middle of the second century, the prevalent doctrine in the leading Churches."

But *after that period*, definite declarations concerning the nature of Christ were given by many of the Church's leaders, a few of which may be quoted.

On pp. 270 and 275, *Justin Martyr* says:

"The Son of God, who alone in the proper sense is called Son, the Logos, who before all creatures was with God . . . has now according to God's will *become man* for the race of man, and hath taken on him to suffer all."

On pp. 279-80, *Theophilus of Antioch* declares that:

"The Logos had a being before He came forth to create, for He is the Reason and the Intelligence of God. For the creation of the world God sent forth the Logos out of Himself. He begot this Logos as manifest, as 'the firstborn of all creation.' But God was not thereby emptied of the Logos,

rather did He retain it in Himself, eternally conversing with it; and He begat only as yet the Logos." How mystifying !

On p. 286, we find that *Clement of Alexandria* taught that:

"The Son is the revealed truth in Person ; the Son is Logos of the Father ; the unity of the almighty creative word and reason."

And on pp. 295-6 :

"Issuing from the Father's will, He showed us God. He became flesh, to be seen, *to be God operative through the mouth of a man.* The Saviour is the revealed mystery, God in men and man in God and the Mediator who accomplishes the Father's will. For the Mediator is the Logos common to both: God's Son on the one side, on the other the Saviour of men."

To which *Dr. Dorner* adds:

"That *Clement* intends to ascribe to Christ *a truly human nature* cannot, it may be supposed, be doubted; for he calls Him not merely *God in human form*, the Logos bearing a body, but also *a man who is in God.*"

On p. 311, the opinion of *Irenæus* is given:

"Already in the creation the Word has revealed the Father and the Son. At length, *the Word has made Himself visible and tangible by being born of Mary.* For it is the Son who is the organ of the Father from beginning to end, and without Him can no man know the Father."

In Div. i., vol. ii., p. 68, *Tertullian's* view of Christ's nature is clearly stated:

'The Son also is invisible, so far as He is the Word of God ; and *prior to the incarnation He was visible merely in visions, enigmas, and similitudes.* All religion, therefore, was symbolical and shadowy, prior to the coming of Christ ; for *in the flesh the Son became for the first time visible from face to face.*"

It is truly astonishing that any human being could have written these words in presence of the definite declaration in Exodus xxxiii. 11: 'The Lord spake unto Moses *face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.*'

On. p. 94 *Hippolytus* is quoted:

"Born of the Virgin and the Holy Ghost, *He exhibited a new man;* in that His *heavenly* nature was constituted of *that* which was of the *Father* as Logos: and as far as concerns the *earthly*, He took a body from the old Adam through the medium of the Virgin. He now, coming forth into the world, revealed Himself as *God in a body;* came forth as *a perfect Man.*"

On pp. 100-1, *Cyprian* says:

"Christ is the Firstborn and the Wisdom of God, through which all things were made. But besides being Son of God from the beginning, He must *needs be* born the second time in the flesh."

On pp. 251-2 we are told what *Athanasius* taught:

"He who created man out of nothing, was able to suffer for all, to stand in the stead of all. Therefore *the Logos came; He who was incorporeal, imperishable, omnipresent, appeared in order to reveal Himself.*"

What a mistake! The 'Word' of St. John was the visible God of the Old Testament; and now in His glorified condition He is once more 'the Word of God'—Ὁ Λόγος του Θεου (Rev. xix. 13).

In *Leo's Epistle to Flavian*, A.D. 449, he very clearly and briefly states his opinion of the nature of Christ:

"The true *God* was born *in the entire and perfect nature of a true man*" (Div. ii., vol. i., p. 87).

These quotations may suffice. They fairly represent the opinions of the orthodox Fathers previous to the Council of Chalcedon, when the Christology of the ancient Church received a definite and dogmatic form which has generally been regarded as authoritative ever since.

Now, however varied those ancient opinions may be, they all agree on two points: First, *that the nature of the pre-Incarnate Son was Divine and Divine only;* and second, *that His nature, as the Son of Mary, was truly and perfectly human.* Or as *Professor Bruce* has stated it in *The Humiliation of Christ* (p. 362):

"In patristic literature μορφὴ δούλου signifies *human nature*, as μορφὴ Θεοῦ signifies *Divine nature*."

It was just here where the Fathers misinterpreted the declarations of Revelation. Those declarations are numerous, simple and perfectly harmonious when taken as God has given them; but having been approached with the preconceived notion *that the Son of God did not become man until He became Incarnate*, they were both misapprehended and misrepresented from the very beginning of post-apostolic times. Instead of '*the form of God*' signifying "the *Divine nature*," it is everywhere represented in the Scriptures as *a visible appearance which was both real and human:* and instead of '*the form of a servant*' signifying "*human nature*," it is invariably spoken of in the New Testament as a fleshly and transitory thing, assumed for a definite purpose, and then left behind when that purpose was accomplished,—the *blood* shed on the cross and the *flesh* spiritualised

from the moment of the resurrection. This twofold mistake concerning the nature of Christ has entailed on many generations a burden of perplexity, doubt and discussion too heavy to be borne—a burden which has weakened the faith, chilled the love and lessened the service of myriads—a burden which has brought many discords and divisions into the Christian Church (as in the case of the Protestant Church in Germany), and a burden which has fearfully weighted the Gospel, and made its testimony unspeakably less powerful and attractive than it ought to have been. The apostles of our Lord were Divinely inspired men, and therefore all their statements concerning Christ's nature are in full accord one with another; but the Fathers were neither apostles nor inspired, and were not infallibly led into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus any more than are Christian teachers and preachers in the present day. The peculiar reverence frequently given to their opinions—especially by Roman Catholic and Anglican "priests"—is not grounded in reason, and would often be amusing if it were not sad.

We earnestly inquire with the Bible in our hand: —*Is it impossible* to attain to a correct conception of His nature, in both its pre-Incarnate and Incarnate states? Has Divine Revelation failed to reveal the Christ with sufficient clearness and fulness, to enable us to understand Him? Must He too, like the Father, remain for ever the Great Unknown? We do not believe it. The variety and perplexing nature of the Christologies which have been propounded since the days of the Fathers, have all arisen out of

the one original mistake, *that the Son of God never became Man until He became Incarnate.* This idea has been taken to the Scriptures by a multitude of both ancient and modern interpreters, who have tried to harmonise their statements with this preconceived notion; and the result has been—just what might naturally have been expected—an unending series of obscure, conflicting and altogether bewildering theories, which can never satisfy or give rest to any rational mind. What the Scriptures say about the nature of Christ was Divinely meant to be understood; ay, and it is revealed with sufficient clearness to be understood, if only we take their declarations as they stand and not pervert and destroy their meaning by importing into them the conclusions of pagan philosophy and the empty imaginings of metaphysical minds. We therefore ask our readers to unite with us in prayerfully testing anew the current beliefs of the Catholic Church regarding the nature of Christ; that these beliefs may be confirmed to our own mind, or modified until they are brought into manifest harmony with the sacred Scriptures. While "it is the function of the Church to teach, it is the function of the Word to prove"; and therefore, it is well from time to time to examine accepted doctrines by that Divinely-human Book out of which more and more light is constantly breaking forth—especially those which seem to be either mystical or confused. And surely, the doctrine of the Person of Christ ought most of all to be thus dealt with, for rightly to apprehend His nature is to reach the very core of revealed truth; while to mis-

apprehend that great centre, is likely to lead to mistakes all round its circumference. Let us honestly deal then with the Christological Scriptures; and if we should be led to see that their teachings are altogether different from what we may hitherto have believed them to be, may God help us to receive the truth in the love of it; and when we have received it not only to 'hold it fast,' but also to '*hold it forth*' for the glory of God, the honour of Christ, the extension of His kingdom in the world, and the salvation and well-being of humanity.

No thoughtful person, we imagine, who considers the matter, will hesitate to agree with *Dr. Dorner* when he says in *The Person of the Christ* (vol. i., p. 92):

"There is undeniably a very significant distinction between the written productions of the apostolic age and those of the age immediately following; and it is hardly possible to represent the relation of the one to the other more erroneously than when the apostolic age is called, in a dogmatical respect, a germ and beginning, whilst the age of the apostolic Fathers is regarded as the fruitful unfolding of that germ. If we try each of these ages by the standard of its Christian knowledge, we shall find, beyond all doubt, a serious falling off in the age following that of the apostles. What was in the earlier age the actual spiritual possession of the distinguished men whom the Lord chose, trained, and equipped, was far from being all retained by the succeeding age, much less was a higher stage of Christian knowledge attained."

If this be true of the first age after the apostles, is it not likely to be still more true of the ages after that, when the bright sunshine of Gospel truth was being progressively overclouded by the pride and ambition, the ritual and superstition of a world-

corrupted Church? Recognizing the likelihood of this, we should be careful not to lay too much stress on the opinions of the Fathers.

MODERN OPINIONS

Before quoting our modern writers, we shall refer, in passing, to the words of the famous Alexandrian philosopher—Philo, who was an adept at perverting Scripture, and by whose teachings many have been misled. He described the Old Testament Theophanies as "*irradiations of Divine power*," while the Bible invariably represents them as *the manifestations of a Person* who was at once both human and Divine. His idea was wholly mistaken.

In his Introduction to *The Person of Christ* (p. 14) *Dr. Dorner* says:

> "That *Jehovah*, He who is highly exalted above all that is finite—who, in the sense of forming a conception of Him, cannot be seen, yea, the very sight of whom would consume—that He should come down to this world, should put on a finite nature and *become Man*, is an idea which never could have come into the Hebrew religion out of itself. It cannot be alleged against what is here advanced that under the ancient economy *Jehovah* by no means *appears* as afar off from the world and uncommunicative, but rather nigh to the world, yea, filling it with His *omnipresence;* revealing Himself first to the patriarchs *in manifold manner*, and by many *appearances and signs* made Himself *known* to them. For all this is quite compatible with what has been said above; neither excludes the other."

This is an extrordinary passage. Consider it carefully. If the "appearances" of Jehovah were *personal*, they could not be "omnipresent"; and if they were not personal but "signs" only, then they

were merely *symbols* and not manifestations of "Himself." But all the appearances recorded were personal and human; and by those to whom He thus appeared He was called 'God.' *Dr. Dorner's* declaration is absolutely opposed to the entire teachings of the Old Testament Scriptures, which plainly tell us that Jehovah was both God and Man, as we shall presently see.

The late *Dr. Delitzsch*, in his *System of Biblical Psychology* (pp. 80, 81), says:

"*Scripture appropriates to God human members, but still without anywhere speaking of a body of God. God indeed appears to the seers in human form: nevertheless, the thought of an everlasting self-investing of the Divine nature in a human corporeity is absolutely foreign to it.*"

Now this is a very definite and dogmatic statement: it declares that all the Old Testament appearances of the Lord "in human form" were mere appearances—only apparitional. Is that in harmony with the teachings of the Word? Did not the Lord say to Aaron and Miriam concerning Moses, '*the form of the Lord shall he behold*'? And under the oak-trees at Mamre, did He not eat and drink of the meal which Abraham provided? And did not the Lord and His companion-angels say to the patriarch when he proposed to wash their feet, 'So do as thou hast said'? *If the 'form' of the Lord was not a body, what was it?* True, it descended and ascended, appeared and disappeared, like the form of Christ after His resurrection; but was not His risen form a body? Did He not say to His disciples, 'Handle Me, and see'? Did He not eat before them, just as He and

the two angels did at Mamre? The pre-Incarnate body of the Lord was *spiritual*, and His body after He rose from the dead was *spiritual*, therefore they manifested themselves in a similar way and are spoken of in Scripture in exactly similar terms. If the appearances of the Saviour after His resurrection were real and human, what ground is there for supposing that all His pre-Incarnate appearances were not equally real and human? If *Dr. Delitzsch* and other expositors had been less influenced by the foolish philosophizings of Philo and the transcendental declarations of the Fathers, it is probable that they would have found it easier to interpret and harmonize the teachings of Scripture regarding the Old Testament appearances of the Jehovah. In another place the Doctor says, "*The Church rejected this humanizing of God.*" So much the worse for the Church, we unhesitatingly reply, for in rejecting the humanity of the Visible God, it threw away one of the sublimest truths and most comforting facts revealed in the sacred Word—a fact which throws a flood of light on the mediatorial work of the Son of God, the nature of man, and the necessity and nature of the Incarnation. But what was the Church, which committed this gigantic mistake and age-enduring blunder? It was not the Church of the apostles, for—as we shall presently see—it taught the visibility and substantiality of the pre-Incarnate Lord in the very strongest and most definite manner. It was the Church of the Fathers which erred here, as it also did in many other important matters. Along with a false and baneful system of so-called spiritualizing, it developed

a marvellous faculty for making huge assumptions on the very narrowest grounds—assumptions upon which the largest ecclesiasticisms in the Christendom of to-day have been mainly built up—and these evil tendencies and habits lay at the root of its misapprehensions. It would have been well if Christian men had always believed that the Scriptures say just what God intended they should, and that the most simple and natural interpretation of their declarations is the best. The Church to which *Dr. Delitzsch* refers was far from being infallible, and very frequently misinterpreted the teachings of the Word, both in relation to the nature of Christ, and the nature of the Christian Church itself.

Good old *Matthew Henry* tells us in his comments on Genesis xxxii. 30, that—

"*The Lord of the angels often appeared, and occasionally in a human shape, before He assumed the human nature for good and all.*"

But when or where, we inquire, did He ever appear in any other shape than the human? He is often called 'a man,' and—so far as we know—all His Old Testament appearances were alike. True, He sometimes appeared *in glory* (as to Abraham in Ur, and to Moses in the desert of Sinai), and at other times *without the glory* (as to Abraham at Mamre, and to Jacob, Joshua, and Manoah), just as afterwards, in the days of His flesh, He was seen by Peter, James, and John, on the Mount of Transfiguration, both with and without the glory; but all His appearances were those of 'a man.'

In *Mediatorial Sovereignty*, *George Steward* writes:

"*The Lord God appeared often familiarly to men in the human form, or its equivalent.*"

The words "its equivalent" seem to be utterly meaningless in the light of Scripture statement. What can they signify? In what are we to find "the equivalent" of the human form? Was it merely a ghost of that form?—an apparition? If so, it must have been a very substantial apparition, for It ate and drank, walked and talked, had Its feet washed, and acted altogether in a very human-like fashion (Gen. xviii.).

In a book recently published, the author—who is a scholarly man—inquires concerning the Old Testament appearances:

"*Were these the manifestations of the pre-existent Messiah, or were they the manifestations of Jehovah Himself, the Divine Being essentially—the God who is emphatically 'a Spirit'? Under any circumstances we have, to say the least, in these manifestations the shadowing forth of the human form, rudiments, so to speak, of that Divine Ideal which was . . . absolutety developed and set forth when the Logos became flesh, and the Lord Jesus, as very man, was clearly and fully revealed.*"

We have here a sample of the utter confusion of thought which exists in many earnest, intelligent and devout minds regarding the appearances of the pre-Incarnate Christ. The quotation is full of errors. The writer asks, "Were these the manifestations of *the Divine Being essentially—the God who is emphatically 'a Spirit'?*" Paul gives the answer, 'Whom no man hath seen, *nor can see*' (1 Tim. vi. 10). Again, he says, "We have in these manifestations *the rudiments*, so to speak, of that *Divine Ideal* . . . which was set forth when the Logos became flesh, and the

Lord Jesus, as *very man*, was clearly and fully revealed." In other words, the Man of the Old Testament was imperfectly human, and the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth the Divine Ideal of man. All this is exactly the opposite of the truth, as revealed in Scripture. The Primal Man, in whose image and likeness man was made, was the Perfect Man—God's Ideal of Man; and the Incarnate Christ, who was made in 'the likeness of sinful flesh,' had to be 'made perfect through sufferings.'

The late *Dr. Dale*, of Birmingham, in his admirable work on *Christian Doctrine* (pp. 157-9), says:

"The Eternal Father would have remained for ever unknown but for the Word that was in the beginning with God and was God." . . . "We need a God who is 'afar off' nearer—One infinitely greater than ourselves, and belonging to other realms of life." "But we also need a God who is 'nigh at hand.'" . . . "A remote God, reigning in inaccessible heights of majesty and glory, does not satisfy us. He is too far away for us to be sure of His sympathy, compassion, and grace." . . . "Christ not only reveals the Infinite and the Eternal God (who in His infinitude and eternity transcends the universe and remains for ever above and apart from it), but He accepts human limitations," etc. . . . "Now, we *know* that God is God 'nigh at hand,' as well as a God 'afar off.'"

These are admirable statements, and all of them gloriously true; but the much-beloved and greatly lamented writer restricted their application to the Incarnate Christ. Was it necessary thus to restrict them? Are they not equally applicable to the Creator of man, as to the Saviour of sinners? Had *sinless* humanity no craving for a God nigh at hand to reveal the God afar off? Thoughtfully consider this matter for a little. If the first of our race was

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brought into being by the Lord God and made in the image and likeness of Him who created him, is it believable that he could long have been satisfied merely with the objects of the material universe by which he was overshadowed and surrounded? Beautiful and interesting though all these objects were, had he known of nothing else and nothing higher upon which to concentrate the thoughts of his mind, the affections of his heart and the aspirations of his spirit, the world would soon have become to him a great emptiness, and life itself an utter weariness too heavy to be borne. A spiritual being could never find entire rest and satisfaction in the contemplation and enjoyment of merely natural things. Neither could he have found any real affinity and fellowship with the lower creatures around him, for none of them had been endowed with the lofty faculties and noble capacities which he possessed—reason and judgment, God-consciousness and will, faith and love, obedience and service, aspiration and worship. The very greatness of his nature as compared with theirs would have made a real and permanent companionship impossible, and brought him into a condition of intolerable loneliness and misery. The Lord God saw that it was not good for man to be alone, and graciously made a helpmeet for him. The Woman he received as a gift from his Creator was part of himself and yet a counterpart—one with whom he could enjoy constant companionship, and the delightful communion of sympathy and love. While she divided his nature she also completed its unity, and both by her separateness and

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oneness added greatly to his joy. His intellectual and social nature could now in large measure rest and be satisfied, though not wholly, but his highest nature would still have longed and pined for what it had not—and why? Because it was made not only by God, but for God, and could never be contented with that which was merely human. Being spiritual as well as social in his nature, his highest aspirations and deepest desires could be met and satisfied only with the Divine and Eternal. God made him too great, to be contented with anything less than Himself. God was his supreme necessity. In Him, and in Him only, could he find a home for the heart, a resting-place for the spirit, and a perfectly sufficient portion. How then was he to obtain the true knowledge of God, without which he could neither receive nor reciprocate the love of God, nor be filled with His Spirit, nor keep His commandments, nor worship Him in spirit and truth, nor find the full, the unchanging, and the abiding inheritance of his being in the enjoyment of His fellowship and favour? This knowledge could not be given to him, as he needed to receive it, either by Nature or Woman, or any created Angel, or—as we have already seen—by the Spirit of God, who does not directly reveal and glorify the Father. The visible Son makes known the invisible Father, and the Spirit—through the medium of the truth as it is in the Son—makes known both the Son and the Father. How then was the Son in the beginning to make God known to man? We cannot conceive of His doing so in any other way than by *personal manifestation*. 'No man

hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, *He hath declared Him.*' He declared Him in the beginning, as He afterwards did in the days of His flesh, as He does in the heavens now, and as He shall continue to do for ever and ever. Christ has always been, and shall eternally be, the Revealer of God. Was it necessary that man should become a fallen and guilty creature, and that the Son of God should be 'made of a woman' and put 'under the law,' in order that the eternally invisible and far-off God should be brought nigh unto men? Surely not! and, if not, then how could God the Father be 'revealed,' 'declared,' and manifested by the Son, if the Son also was God *and nothing else*? It is not conceivable that the Infinite and Invisible Father could ever have been revealed and manifested unto men by an equally Divine and Invisible Son. Mediatorship was necessary, *and mediatorship implies both form and visibility.*

In the same book (pp. 276-278) Dr. Dale inquired:

"*Can we tell how men originally came to believe in God?* [The italics are ours.] I have put aside in the text purely speculative inquiries as to how a belief in the existence of the superhuman, the Divine, first came to mankind: whether it was created by what is commonly described as a supernatural revelation, or whether it was the result of the working of what we call the natural powers of men on the glory and terror of the material universe and the facts of human experience. Nor have I inquired whether the rudimentary religious conceptions of savage tribes in our own times are the ruined traditions of a nobler faith; or by what steps, if they represent the earliest thoughts of men about God, the ascent was made to a loftier conception of Him. Speculations of this description are attracting and interesting, but the historical materials at our

disposal for reaching any certain conclusion seem to me to be very scanty. Ancient hymns, ancient prayers, ancient precepts, ancient traditions, preserved in our own sacred books and in the sacred books of the great religions of the East ; ancient monuments, ancient religious rites—these enable us to travel back, and to travel securely, towards the dawn of religious faith. But before these books were written, before these monuments were set up, before these rites were instituted, man had already come to believe in the Divine. They do not enable us to watch the breaking of the new-born day on the previous night ; their existence is the witness, and the proof, that the sun of religious faith had already risen. The actual origin of faith lies in a remoter past. And when these books, these monuments, these rites, fail us, our path is lost ; we can go no further with any confidence. . . . In the attempt to discover how man first came to believe in God, it appears to me that *the materials are wanting* which are necessary to make the investigation successful."

This, surely, is a very mournful confession to be made by one of the wisest and strongest Christian thinkers of recent times. It is truly astonishing that he was able to make it with the Bible in his hands; for what did his confession imply? It implied this: That after the Lord God had created man, He left both him and his posterity for ages without any knowledge of Himself, except that which he might gradually and slowly attain by his gropings in the dim light of Nature, and by the study of his own constitution and experience and those of others. But was it likely that the Creator would thus leave His intelligent and moral creatures in ignorance of Himself, until in the long and slow process of the ages a book-revelation could be written? It would not have been like him to do so, for His nature is Love. He always goes before His people with the blessings

of goodness, and surely the best of all the blessings He could bestow was the knowledge of Himself.

And that knowledge was given. The *Lord* God, who created man 'in his own image and *likeness*,' was also his Teacher from the beginning. As a poet has truly said:

> "Thou didst, in love Divine, descend
> Ere earth was veiled in gloom,
> And talk with man, as friend with friend,
> In Eden's golden bloom."

The Creator instructed Adam and Eve, both before and after the Fall; Abraham, in Ur of the Chaldees and in Canaan; Jacob, in his various wanderings; Moses, in the desert of Midian; the Israelites, from the summit of Sinai; Joshua, after the death of Moses; and all the prophets of Israel through the whole course of the Old Dispensations. They were honestly able to make the great declaration, 'Thus saith the Lord.' It was He who commanded Moses to write the Oral Law, which forms a large part of the Pentateuch. And, as we are told, 'Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. . . . And Moses commanded the Levites, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God; that it may be there for a witness against thee' (Deut. xxxi. 9, 25, 26).

And may not all the books of Moses have been written by Moses himself in the wilderness? It is very improbable that he could have written any of their

contents in the desert of Midian, before the Lord appeared to him for the first time at the burning bush; for although 'he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,' there is no ground for supposing that he was also familiar with the history of humanity from the beginning, and knew the great stories of the Creation and the Flood. The so-called Higher Critics assure us that the oldest records of these great events are found on the Babylonian tablets, and that they were inscribed hundreds of years before the book of Genesis was written. This may be true, and yet there is no ground for believing with the critics, that the Mosaic records are indebted for their existence to the ancient tablets. Why? 'Because the Lord spake by the mouth of His holy prophets *since the world began*'; and the Lord Himself was the Instructor of the race from the very beginning of human history—long before Babylon existed, or its clay tablets were made and inscribed. Their writings were, no doubt, the greatly corrupted records of primitive traditions—the traditions of Divine and prophetic teachings, which were ultimately recorded in Genesis. Another has truly said: "A close study of the origins and migrations of religious symbols proves to demonstration that the Babylonian legends and Egyptian Osirian myths were derived from patriarchal prophecies and primitive symbolism." Apart from any documents or traditions which the elders of Israel, or others, might have given him, is it not natural and reasonable to suppose that Moses both asked and received *the counsel of the Lord*, who frequently visited him

during his forty years' sojourn in the wilderness? Jesus said: 'If ye believed Moses, ye would believe Me; for he wrote of Me' (John v. 46). And this was no mere opinion of our Lord, but a matter of certain knowledge; for did He not say to Nicodemus, 'We speak that we do know, and bear witness of that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness' (John iii. 11). He never uttered opinions or speculations, but only and always the truth. 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.' These words, spoken by John the Baptist at the *commencement* of Christ's earthly ministry, had a *retrospective* reference—'He *hath* declared Him.' Yes, from the very beginning of human history He had spoken and acted as the visible God and the great Mediator between God and men. 'The God Almighty,' who communed with Abraham, and the 'I Am' and the 'Jehovah' who manifested Himself frequently and familiarly to Moses, *was the pre-Incarnate Christ*, and not God the Father. This is the all-important truth which the Old Theology failed, and still fails, to apprehend; and which left the door wide open for entrance into the Christian Church, of all the foolish misapprehensions and illogical conclusions of Unitarianism and of so-called New Theologies. The Bible was given to reveal and enlighten, and not to confuse and mystify; and yet under the interpretations of the *spiritualizers* (?) and the rationalizers (?) it does both to a lamentable extent and in a large degree.

Dr. Fairbairn also, in his splendid and masterly

work, *Christ in Modern Theology*, has thus written on pp. 475-7:

"If God is to become the real Father of man, and man the real son of God, then all the energies, and loves and ideals of the *Unseen Paternity* must be incarnated and organized *in a visible Sonship*, that they may become creative of a mankind which shall realize the filial ideal." . . . "If God's Fatherhood is to be a reality to man, he must see it as it is, know it by experience, by handling it, and by being handled by it. And the only way in which it can thus come is *in the form of humanity*." . . . "*The Incarnation* may be described as the most illustrious example of the supremacy of God's moral over His physical attributes, and of the relation they hold to the healing and happiness of man. As such it is of all acts the act that most becomes Him, and so the one we can least conceive as accidental. And therefore, though its special form may be effected by the fact of sin, yet *it were mere impertinence to imagine that but for the accident of sin the universe would have been deprived of its most invincible evidence of grace*." [The italics are ours.]

Now these are true, beautiful, and far-reaching statements, the full significance of which *Dr. Fairbairn* himself does not seem to apprehend. If God, as he argues, must have been incarnated '*in a visible Sonship*'; if that visible Sonship must have come '*in the form of humanity*': if that visible Sonship in human form must have come '*apart from the accident of sin*,' then we earnestly and urgently inquire: If sin had never existed, *when* was it most likely that the Son of the Father would become the God-Man—the Visible God? Surely, *before man was created*, and not after the human race had existed for hundreds or thousands of years upon the earth, and been developed in large measure out of the natural into the spiritual condition! *Apart from sin*, what reason

can be imagined for *a flesh-and-blood* Incarnation of the Divine Son, late in time and after sinless humanity had far advanced on its upward and heavenly way and become more or less 'like unto the angels'? There is no ground for such a conception, either in reason or in revelation. One or two of the apostolic Fathers originated the idea, but St. Augustine opposed it; and since then it has not been held by many notable theologians until our own day. We wonder much that any of them have been able to revive it, for it is a baseless fancy, and has no sanction in the Word of God. Referring to the idea of an Incarnation, even though sin had never existed, *Dr. Denney*, in his *Studies in Theology*, most truly says, on p. 101: "Scripture never gives the faintest hint of any opening for the mind in this direction." And *Dr. Denney* is right. But *why* does Scripture never give a hint of such an Incarnation? Is not this the reason, that the *Lord* God—the Divine Son—*was already Man from the beginning?* Truly, "it were mere impertinence to imagine that but for the accident of sin the universe would have been deprived of its most invincible evidence of grace"; but it was not so deprived, for the *Creator* of all things was at once God and Man—the Visible God.

In *The Image of Christ* (p. 76), *Dr. Oosterzee* says:

> "Even though man had not fallen, he must have been gradually trained and led up to a higher perfection. And why should we not suppose that among the means which the highest love would have used to this end, even the sending of His Son in human flesh would have had its place?"

This is an extraordinary guess—a splendid specula-

tion! The writer clearly apprehended that if man was to be "led up to a higher perfection," he must have a Divine-Human Teacher and Exemplar; but he failed to recognize the fact that that great necessity had already been gloriously met in the Creator. Surely the *first* man required to be "gradually trained and led up to a higher perfection," as much as his posterity in after-time; and if so, the Divine Man must have been there before him to give the training and leading which were necessary. It is not God's method to be behindhand in meeting the requirements of His children; He 'goes before them with the blessings of His goodness.' It is true that a Divine Humanity was a necessity to creaturely culture and development, satisfaction and perfecting; but it is not true that angels and men required to wait for the Divine Man until the Word was made '*flesh*.' *The Creator was God-Man—the Primal Man.* Is not His humanity clearly proved by two facts: *first*, that He made man 'in His own image and likeness' (the word *likeness* is never used in Scripture about anything which is not *visible*); and *second*, that all through the Old Testament dispensations, He frequently appeared to men as 'a man,' and never as anything else?

Commenting on Paul's words in Phil. ii. 6, 'Who being originally in the form of God,' Bishop Moule says: "*Form is reality in manifestation.*" This is true, but an explanation is added which we cannot understand: "Who in God's manifested being subsisting, seeming Divine, because He was Divine in the full sense of Deity." Yes, truly the Lord God

had a form; and His human form was "*reality in manifestation.*"

In *Israel My Glory* (p. 192), the late Rev. John Wilkinson says:

"This Angel of Jehovah can be none other than Jehovah Himself. He is spoken of as one of the three *men* who came to Abraham. He is spoken of as a Man when wrestling with Jacob. He answers Manoah's question, 'Art Thou the Man?' by a distinct '*I am.*' This Angel said to Jacob, 'I am the God of Bethel.' This Man of God is Jehovah Himself; and if the Scriptures mean what they say, then Jehovah has appeared in Old Testament times in the form of a man, though not Incarnate. IF JEHOVAH HAS APPEARED AS MAN WITHOUT A HUMAN BODY, there is no difficulty in believing that He has appeared as man in a human body."

When did Jehovah appear as a man, *without a human body? Not at Mamre,* where He partook of the food which Abraham and Sarah set before him; *nor at Peniel,* where He wrestled with Jacob in the darkness of the night; *nor on Sinai,* where He received from the hands of Moses the tables of hewn stone, and handed them back again to His servant after he had written upon them, for the second time, the ten commandments of the Moral Law; *nor at Jericho,* where he stood before Joshua with a drawn sword in His hand; *nor at Ophrah,* where He appeared unto Gideon, called him to be the Deliverer of Israel from the power of the Midianites, and received a food-offering at the hands of the young man as He sat under the oak-tree at Ophrah; *nor at Zorah,* where Manoah and his wife entreated Him to tarry for a meal which they desired to prepare for Him. The humanity of the Lord God was not

apparitional, but real—as real as the humanity which He wears in the heavens to-day.

In his book on *Genesis*, and when writing of the Jehovistic Documents, Dr. W. H. Bennett says:

"The narratives set forth and illustrate a faith in one Holy God, who punishes sin and rewards righteousness. The author's unsophisticated views as to doctrines *allow him to speak of Yahweh as if He were a man*, and often appeared on earth as a man amongst men—working for them, talking to them, and eating with them. This way of writing sets forth most vividly *the nearness of the Divine Presence*, the keen interest which *God* takes in human affairs, and the reality of an intimate fellowship between God and man." [The italics are ours.]

To any intelligent person who accepts the Bible narratives as they stand, such a statement as this by Professor Bennett is simply amazing. Facts are changed into fictions, and the Word of God made of none effect by his unwarrantable and imaginative conclusions.

In the same book (p. 313), when writing on Jacob's wrestling with 'a man,' he says:

"The form and meaning of the original story are uncertain, because probably even the author of the Primitive Document found in it features which he omitted or altered because they were unsatisfactory; and later editors may have made further changes. Probably in the original the 'Man' was the deity, Elohim or El, worshipped at Peniel; this deity was distinct from Yahweh, and, in the original story, Jacob compelled him to utter his name. It was often a point of magic to compel the spirit who had been conjured up to reveal his name. Jacob also won a blessing by force from this deity—*i.e.*, the sanctuary at Peniel became a place where Israelites might worship and be blessed. The narrative may be a reminiscence of the conquest of the district by the Israelites, which would involve the subjection of the deity of Peniel by the God of Israel, and the

appropriation of the sanctuary to the use of the Israelites. The 'halting' upon the 'thigh' was no doubt a feature of a ritual dance at this sanctuary, the origin of which was explained by our narrative. This story would be preserved in the sanctuary at Peniel. The story of the wrestling by night with the unknown supernatural being is one of Rembrandtesque grandeur. Probably, however, the editor who completed the Pentateuch and inserted this story in its final form, intended the 'man' to be understood as a representative of the God of Israel, and interpreted the 'wrestling' as a symbol of wrestling with God in prayer; and the Christian Church has always used the narrative in this sense."

This is truly an astounding exposition by the learned professor. It is utterly devoid of both knowledge and certainty, as the use of the following words abundantly prove: "probably," "uncertain," "unsatisfactory," "altered," "further changes," "may be," etc. And after the sacred narrative has been mauled by one editor, and cobbled by another, and amended by a third, this is the conclusion at which he arrives:

"Probably, however, the editor who completed the Pentateuch and inserted this story *in its final form, intended the 'man' to be understood as a representative of the God of Israel, and interpreted the 'wrestling' as a symbol of wrestling with God in prayer; and the Christian Church has always used the narrative in this sense.*" [The italics are ours.]

Alas, for the Church! How foolish she must be to be willing to take the story, even "in its final form," as a part of Divine revelation, after all the additions, alterations, and modifications which various editors had made to it. Nobody seems to know who those editors were, nor the extent and nature of their work, and yet its ultimate results are to be believed, accepted and practically applied by every Christian

who regards the Bible as the veritable word of the ever-living God. Such so-called criticism demands a faith which is simply prodigious.

In the *Christology of Jesus* (pp. 204, 205) Dr. Stalker says:

"Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel—that is, a large and dignified delegation representing the whole people—went up to the knoll where the altar stood, and there they did eat and drink. No doubt their food was the flesh of the sacrifices, the blood of which had been disposed of as we have seen; but the peculiarity of the feast was that it was a feast with God. Not that He partook of their food: no such crude idea is hinted at; but in some mysterious way they were made overwhelmingly certain of His nearness. It is said, 'They saw the God of Israel, and there was under His feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone, and, as it were, the very heaven for clearness.' As they ate, the cloud opened above them, and the view upward became clear—up to the blue sky. But it was more than sky—a deeper, yet more pellucid blue than mortal eye had ever beheld—a pavement of sapphire, like the very heaven for clearness; and above it, using it as the footstool of His throne, a Presence ineffable made itself felt, not visible to the bodily eye, yet thrilling the soul with the consciousness of its proximity. 'And' it is added, 'on the nobles of Israel He laid not His hand.' This is the word which shows the heart of the whole transaction. That no man can see God and live, is a principle of the Old Testament throughout; yet here the Divine Presence was so shrouded in love and reconciliation that, instead of producing annihilating horror, it communicated only peace and delight."

Dr. Stalker's book is a very admirable production, but the passage just quoted—like a fly in precious ointment—largely reduces its value.

The Scripture narrative plainly declares, once and again, that the elders of the people '*saw the God of Israel*'; and yet Dr. Stalker says that "*a Presence*

ineffable made itself felt, not visible to the bodily eye, yet thrilling the soul with the consciousness of its proximity." Now, this is a direct contradiction of the Bible record. What can we make of it? Shall we accept the writer's comment in preference to the sacred narrative? Certainly not, and why? because it is mistaken. The God of Israel was *a visible Being* who very frequently appeared in the olden time, and spake to many "face to face, as a man with his friend." It was thus that He dealt with Moses, and also thus that He appeared to the elders of Israel on this great and memorable occasion. We cannot believe both the narrative and the comment upon it, for they are wholly antagonistic and irreconcilable. Is it wonderful that the propagators of the so-called New Theology should make a thorough hash of Scripture—accepting, rejecting, and amending it as they please—when such a sound and orthodox theologian as Dr. Stalker, has ventured to treat this simple, though wonderful, narrative in this very extraordinary way? (Note B at the end of the book.)

In the able and interesting work recently published by Dr. James Orr, entitled *The Problem of the Old Testament*, we find the following passages on pp. 112, 113, 125, 126:

"The form of revelation is not, as in the prophetic age, internal, but is predominatingly objective—by dream, vision, theophany, or through the Mal'ach, 'or Angel of Jehovah.' *This last mode of revelation is one deserving of special attention.*" . . . "For this form of revelation is one almost peculiar to the earlier periods—patriarchal and Mosaic—and stands by itself. 'The Angel of Jehovah' is not an ordinary angel, like those in the above passages, but is *a peculiar manifestation of*

Jehovah in the creaturely sphere, for purposes of revelation. Jehovah's name is in him; *he is distinct from Jehovah, yet again mysteriously identified with him;* in address his name is interchanged with that of Jehovah; *he is worshipped as Jehovah.* How came so remarkable a *conception* to be there in this early age, and how came it to be confined to this age? It is certainly no *creation* of the prophetic mind, and can only be explained as *the tradition of a well-known form of revelation* of the olden time." "The anthropomorphisms are *naive* and popular enough; yet beneath them *the conception* of Jehovah as the Creator and Ruler of the world is never lost sight of." "The anthropomorphisms belong either to the older *tradition* the writer is dealing with, or to a vivid and *personalizing* way of setting forth *God's presence and interest in human things*, such as is found in prophets and psalmists to the latest time." [The italics are ours.]

Now, one of the greatest and most interesting problems in the Old Testament, is the numerous appearances of the visible God to men and women of the olden times. Some of them are lengthily and graphically described, as in the 18th of Genesis, and in the 6th and 13th of Judges, and Dr. Orr acknowledges that "This last mode of revelation is one deserving of special attention"; and yet, practically, all that he has told us concerning them, is contained in these few brief selections. This is surprising. Notice also the vagueness and indefiniteness of his statements regarding 'the angel of Jehovah' and 'Jehovah' Himself: "He is distinct from Jehovah," and yet is "mysteriously identified with Him." How could he have been both? And did not the Angel of the Lord Himself, settle that matter very definitely when He said: 'The angel of God spake unto me (Jacob) and said, *I am the God of Bethel*,' etc. (Gen.

xxxi. 11-13). Therefore, Dr. Orr was mistaken when he wrote that the angel of Jehovah was "distinct from Jehovah Himself." And when he tells us that "The anthropomorphisms belong either to the older tradition the writer is dealing with, or to *a vivid and personalizing way of setting forth God's presence and interest in human things*," he seems to intimate that even the appearances of the Lord were not realities, but simply the *conceptions* of those who described them. At any rate, there is nothing either certain or instructive in what he has said concerning them.

In *Divine Love and Wisdom* (p. 8), Swedenborg says:

"God is very Man. In all the heavens there is no other idea of God but the idea of a man. God was seen as a man by Abraham and others. The ancients, from the wise to the simple, thought of God no otherwise than as of a man."

Like all the preceding quotations in this section, this also is mistaken. It speaks of God as a Man, and teaches that the Divine Being whom Abraham and others saw was God. But all this is contrary to Scripture. 'No one hath seen God at any time.'

THE NEW THEOLOGY

In vol. iii. of F. W. Robertson's *Sermons* (p. 56) we thus read:

"There is a truth more blessed still—*the Humanity of Deity*. Before the world was, there was that in the mind of God which we may call the Humanity of His Divinity. It is called in Scripture the Word, the Son, the Form of God. . . . It is through this Humanity *in the mind of God*, if I may dare so to speak of Deity, that a revelation became possible to man. It was the Word that was made flesh; it was the Word that manifested *Itself* to man."

Yes, the 'Word' was only an "It" in the mind of the preacher—the "reason" and "thought" of Philo and the Gnostics.

Mr. Campbell writes:

"If we think of the archetypal eternal Divine Man, the source and sustenance of the universe, and yet transcending the universe, we cannot do better than think of Him in terms of Jesus; Jesus is the fullest expression of that eternal Divine Man on the field of human history. Here, then, we have the first and second factors in the doctrine of the Trinity morally and spiritually construed. The idea of a Divine Man, the emanation of the infinite, the soul of the universe, the source and goal of all humanity, is ages older than Christian theology. It can be traced in Babylonian religious literature, for instance, at a period older even than the Old Testament. It played a not unimportant part in Greek thought, and Philo of Alexandria, a contemporary of Jesus, works it out in some detail in his religio-philosophic system, which aimed to combine the wide outlook of Greek culture with the high seriousness of Hebrew religion. It is a true, indeed an inevitable conception, if we hold anything like a consistent view of the immanence of God in His universe. *With what God have we to do, except the God who is eternally man?* [the italics are ours]. This aspect of the nature of God has been variously described in the course of its history. It has been called the Word, the Son, and, as we have seen, the second person in the Trinity. For various reasons I prefer to call *it*—or, rather, Him—the eternal Christ. I do this because, for one thing, the word 'Christ' is a living word, with a clearly marked ethical content and a great religious value. . . . According to the New Testament writers, Jesus was and is the Christ; but in His earthly life His consciousness of the fact was limited. But as we have come forth from this fontal manhood, we, too, must be to some extent expressions of this eternal Christ; and it is in virtue of that fact that we stand related to Jesus, and that the personality of Jesus has anything to do with us. Here is where the value of our belief in the interaction of the higher and the lower self comes in. Fundamentally, our being is already one with that

of the eternal Christ, and faith in Jesus is faith in Him. Jesus is not one being and the Christ another ; the two are one, and Jesus seems to have known it during His earthly ministry. He lived His life in such a way as to reveal the essence of the Christ nature. He is, therefore, central for us, and we are complete in Him. Here is the goal of all moral effort—Christ. Here, too, is the highest reach of the religious ideal—Christ."

In the *Gain of Life*, printed in his book of sermons, there is a passage on the same important subject, which may help us to apprehend the preacher's ideas on the eternal Christ :

"By the Divine Man, then, was meant that side or expression of the being of God from which the finite universe and all mankind have come forth. The idea in the mind of these old thinkers from whom St. Paul learned this truth was that the being of God, though infinitely complex, and having a myriad aspects of which we can know nothing, is in one of those aspects the source of humanity as distinct from all else. Whatever else He may be, God is eternally man. He is all that we mean by ideal manhood, and infinitely more. There is, therefore, eternally in the heart of God a fontal or archetypal Man to whom we all belong, and whose life is the light of men. I think this is a glorious idea, and irresistibly true."

But here we feel impelled to inquire : *What is the idea ?* We fail to apprehend Mr. Campbell's thought about *the Eternal Christ*, it is so strangely complex and mystical. What does he say ? He has told us that "God is eternally man"—"the ideal manhood"; "in whose *heart* there is a fontal or archetypal Man to whom we all belong." And this is thus explained : "By the Divine Man was meant *that side or expression of the being of God*, from which the finite universe and all mankind have come forth." And then he adds : "This *aspect* of the nature of God, has

been called the Word, the Son, and the second person in the Trinity." How confusing! What does the extraordinary language mean? An *aspect* of the nature of God is called "*a person*," "the second person in the Trinity"—"the Eternal Christ." But was this "aspect of the nature of God" really a living Being? If the archetypal Man was God Himself, *was Christ also a Person?* This is the vital point. Was it He who appeared so often in Old Testament times as the Visible God—'the image of the invisible God,' and in New Testament times as the Son of the Father? Or was the Eternal Christ only an Idea in the Mind of God, or a Purpose in the Heart of God, or a Principle in the Will of God, with whom the man of Nazareth was "one"? Such enigmatical language as is used by the author of *The New Theology* must surely be a darkening of counsel by words without knowledge, and also a misleading of the unwary. If God be "essentially Man," is it not wonderful that the Bible does not say a word concerning it? It tells us that '*God is a Spirit*,' but has never added the declaration that He is *Man*. But it does tell us, that He who was the *Lord* God was '*a man*,' and frequently appeared as such to the men and women of the early generations; while, as yet, there was no Book-Revelation to make known the Divine mind and will. The *Lord* God was both *God* and *Man*. Whenever any preacher turns away from the plain teaching of the Word of God, there is no end to the fallacies into which he may tumble.

We have in these passages characteristic specimens of Mr. Campbell's idealistic philosophy—a philo-

sophy with which he himself and many others are greatly enamoured, but a philosophy also which no faithful interpreter of the Sacred Writings is likely either to accept or propagate. He says: "Jesus is not one being and the Christ another; the two are one." Yes; but in his estimation Jesus was only a man—the son of Joseph; and the pre-Incarnate Christ merely "an aspect of the nature of God"—the God who Himself was "eternally Man": whereas those who accept Christ's own teaching believe that, in His Incarnate life He was the Visible God of the Old Testament embodied in flesh and blood. What He Himself has said settles this point unanswerably and for ever: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was born I Am.'

In *Science and Health* (p. 29) Mrs. Eddy says: "The Christ dwelt for ever an Ideal in the bosom of God, the Divine Principle of the man Jesus." Mr. Campbell and Mrs. Eddy appear to have the same belief about the Eternal Christ; and to both of them He, or rather It, is not a Person at all, but only an Idea or Principle, and therefore a something concerning which they have nothing to say which is either clear or definite.

To speak of "an aspect of the nature of God," as the "Eternal Christ"; or, of "an Ideal in the bosom of God," as "the Divine Principle of the man Jesus"—is nothing less than an unmeaning and misleading jugglery of empty words. When the plain and definite declarations of the Scriptures are either perverted or rejected, any amount of mistaken nonsense can be believed by the human intellect and proudly

proclaimed to others as the most advanced conceptions of the modern mind.

It would be easy to multiply such quotations to almost any extent, from theological treatises, Scripture commentaries, and sermons by orthodox preachers; but these may suffice. When carefully compared, they are seen to be largely out of harmony with the Scriptures which precede them. The latter are all agreed in declaring that the visible Jehovah was the Divine Man, and also that His humanity was as real as His Deity; but some of the former tell us that He who appeared to many persons and talked to them face to face as a man with his friend was *God* (the Father), and that his appearances were visional—Theophanies—mere similacra. It is thus that the Divine appearances are regarded, by Dorner (p. 45), Delitzsch (p. 46), Bennett (p. 62), Stalker (p. 64), Orr (pp. 65, 66), Swedenborg (p. 67), and by Dr. W. N. Clarke in Note at the end of this volume; although the Scriptures throughout plainly testify that God the Father is invisible, and has never been seen by any human being. Is it not wonderful that Christian men can write as they do, in spite of such definite Bible teaching? (Note C at the end of the book.) The Son has been the visible God and the Revealer of the invisible Father from the beginning of time, and shall continue to be so for ever and ever.

Let us now turn to the New Testament Scriptures, and learn what they teach about *the Divine Man in His pre-Incarnate state.*

In Col. i. 15, the Apostle Paul speaks of the Son

as '*the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*' This is one of the very sublimest and most instructive passages of sacred Scripture, regarding the nature of the Christ. But, unfortunately—from the days of the apostolic Fathers—it has been so entirely misapprehended that practically—so far as the great mass of Christian people are concerned—it might as well have had no existence. It is seldom, if ever, taken as a text for sermons; and the vast majority of Bible readers, probably regard it as far too deep and mystical to be understood by ordinary minds. This is very sad, and has proved an incalculable hindrance to the spiritual enlightenment and progress of the Catholic Church for many generations. Surely! Revelation was given to reveal.

Take these words first: '*The image of the invisible God.*' What do they mean? In his brief statements regarding them, *Bishop Ellicott* says:

"Christian antiquity has ever regarded the expression 'image of God' as denoting the eternal Son's perfect *equality* with the Father in respect of His substance, nature, and eternity."

Now, if the good Bishop had paid less attention to the opinion of "Christian antiquity," and more to the uniform declarations of Scripture regarding 'the image of the invisible God,' it is almost certain he would never have written these words. The term 'image' does not refer to *equality* but to *visibility*. The first of our race was made 'in the *image* of Him who created him'; but the fact that he bore His image did not make him *equal* to his Creator. The idea of equality was not in Paul's mind when he

wrote of 'the image of the invisible God': he was thinking of the Invisible brought into view. Our very ablest commentators freely acknowledge this, as we shall presently see.

Let the comments of *Bishop Lightfoot* on these wonderful words be briefly considered. What does he say about 'the *image* of the invisible God'? He takes a much more correct view of the meaning of the term than *Bishop Ellicott* has done. His words are these:

> "He is the *visible* representation of the *unseen* God." . . "The underlying idea of the 'image' is the *manifestation* of the *hidden*." . . . "The Word, whether pre-incarnate or incarnate, is the *revelation* of the *unseen* Father."

These statements are clear and unmistakable and exactly express the view of the visibility of the Son as Creator for which we contend. After all these plain declarations of the learned and able commentator, we naturally expected to find that he believed, with us, that 'the image of the invisible God' *was a Person who could be seen by created beings*,—"the *manifestation* of the *hidden*" and "the *revelation* of the *unseen Father*." There is nothing to the contrary in his commentary on Col. i. 15, for, strangely enough, after so clearly defining the word 'image' he did not proceed to show the applicability of his definitions to the Person of the pre-Incarnate Christ. Had he done so, insurmountable difficulties would have arisen, which must either have been grappled with or fled from—after the manner of the old Scotch preacher who, when he came in his expositions of Scripture to passages he did not understand, was

wont to say, "There are great mysteries here, my friends; let us look them boldly in the face and pass on." But when we turn to what he says on 'the form of God' in Phil. ii. 6, we find what his belief really was. We shall therefore postpone our remarks on the foregoing definitions until we come to the consideration of that passage.

With equal clearness and fuller statement, the *Rev. Dr. A. Maclaren*, of Manchester, says :

"An 'image' is a likeness or representation, as of a king's head on a coin, or of a face reflected in a mirror. *Here, it is that which makes the invisible* VISIBLE. The God who dwells in the thick darkness, remote from sense and above thought, has come forth and made Himself visible to man, even in a very real way has come within the reach of man's senses, *in the manhood of Jesus Christ.*"

These words are a lucid and admirable description of the apostolic declaration ; anything more accurate and beautiful need not be desired. But let no one fail to notice that the great preacher has plainly *misapplied* them. Mark his concluding words, which we have put in italics, and then read the passage in Colossians upon which he was commenting. That passage does not refer *to the manhood of Jesus Christ the Redeemer*, but to His *visibility* as the *Creator* of all things, 'The image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for *in Him were all things created*,' etc. Let the words of *Dr. Maclaren* be rightly applied, and we cannot wish for a clearer or better interpretation of the apostle's statement. 'The image of the invisible God,' he says, was "that which makes the invisible *visible*." Exactly so, and

therefore the Son from before creation was the Visible God.

Turn next to the other declaration, '*The firstborn of all creation*.' These are remarkable words. Many have attempted to prove from them that 'the First born' was a created being, and therefore only a creature, though probably the first and greatest. But, if He was merely a creature, however great, how could He have been 'the image of the invisible God'? Can clay represent gold, or any created being the Uncreated One? Impossible! Others, who accept the words 'the image of the invisible God' as proving that He was Divine, regard His Old Testament appearances as merely apparitional, and thus empty of their sublime significance the clause of the verse which we are now considering, '*the firstborn of all creation*.' The two statements are counterpartal, and what God hath joined together let not man put asunder. Properly understood, they are in perfect harmony. 'The (visible) image of the invisible God' was 'the *firstborn* of all creation,' and '*Firstborn*' means a great deal more than mere preexistence. It certainly implies *a new beginning*, and declares that He (the Divine Son) became a substantial Being in whom were hidden potentially the principles and essences of all things, 'for *in* Him were all things created.' In short (as He told John), He was Himself 'the *beginning* of the creation of God' (Rev. iii. 14). Before we leave this point, we would refer for a moment to Prov. viii. 22-31—a passage which has perplexed a multitude of commentators for ages, but which in the light of the true

Christology is perfectly clear and simple. It tells us four things: *first*, that He who speaks was '*formed*' (ver. 22); *second*, that He was the '*master workman*,' or Creator of all things (ver. 30); *third*, that He was the *Father's delight* (ver. 30); and, *fourth, that His own delights were* '*with the sons of men*' (ver. 31). The Bible throughout is a beautiful harmony.

For what great ends did the Divine Son thus become '*the firstborn of all creation*'? Primarily to *create* all things, and then to act as *Mediator* between the Invisible Father and all His finite children. Paul tells us three things concerning Him: *first*, that 'all things were created *in* Him; *second*, that all things were created *by* Him; and, *third*, that all things were created *for* Him' (Col. i. 16). 'It pleased the Father, that in Him should all fulness dwell,' and therefore in Him as the 'Firstborn' were contained "the promise and potency" of all things.

In his great work on *The Atonement* (pp. 7, 8), the late *Dr. Dale* says:

"Nor has the thought of the Church ever reached a firm, coherent and permanent conception of the original relation of the Eternal Word or Son of God to the created universe, and especially to our own race—a relation which appears to underlie the possibility of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to involve the solution of some of the severest speculative difficulties connected with the theory of Redemption. The great words of St. Paul—'For in Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth . . . and He is before all things,' give us a glimpse of vast and fruitful provinces of truth which are almost unknown to us. They have been traversed from time to time by the solitary path of adventurous speculation, but the Church has never made her home there: the golden harvests are unreaped; not even a wandering sect

has pitched its tents and fed its flocks on those rich and boundless plains. They belong to a remote and glorious realm lying far beyond the frontiers of familiar truth —a realm whose mountain ranges and rivers are laid down in no theological survey which the Church has accepted as authentic, and whose wealth has never enriched the common thought of Christendom. All things were created 'in Him,' 'by Him' and 'for Him,' and 'in Him all things consist'—these wonderful words are still "dark with excess of light." They affirm the existence and define the character of relations between the Divine personality of the Lord Jesus Christ and the universe, which we have never been able to grasp; but a clear conception of these relations is indispensable to a satisfactory theory of the Atonement."

Now, these are not only beautiful and charming words; they are profoundly suggestive. And in the light of a clear apprehension of the real nature of Christ, they are also deeply pathetic and affecting. Like Moses on the summit of Pisgah viewing the land of promise from afar, the lamented writer stood as on a mountain height of instinctive spiritual longing and high intellectual speculation, and wistfully contemplated the distant yet manifestly beautiful and fertile country "in which the Church has not yet made her home." His words, though winged with sighs, give eloquent expression to the enraptured hopes of his heart—hopes which were nothing less than blissful prophecies of a better day to come. Yes, truly, the happy day is coming, when the Christian Church shall leave the wilderness of an ill-conceived Christology and a comparatively unproductive and unbeautiful Theology behind her, pass over the Jordan of a true knowledge of the nature of Christ, and enter into the country "whose golden harvests are unreaped." Ah! if only *Dr. Dale* had

apprehended the glorious truth that the Creator was God-Man—'the form of God'—'the image of the invisible God'—'the firstborn of all creation'—'the beginning of the creation of God'—'the Mediator between God and men, Himself man'—'the Head' of the human race; he might himself have been the Joshua whom God would have appointed and honoured to lead His believing people into Immanuel's land, 'flowing with milk and honey.' He would have found in the original Divine Humanity of the Creator, and in the flesh-and-blood humanity of the Redeemer, facts which solve a multitude of mysteries, especially those of the Incarnation and Atonement—and in their solution his mind and heart would have realized a deep satisfaction and an abounding joy. But in him the promise of Jesus has been fulfilled, 'what thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter'; for we doubt not that in the clearer light of Paradise into which he has entered, the mysteries which perplexed him here are mysteries no longer.

Let us now go to Phil. ii. 6, where we shall find the most wonderful passage in the New Testament referring to the nature of the Divine Man, '*Who being (originally) in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God.*'

Dr. Bruce, in *The Humiliation of Christ* (p. 8), says that:

"The diversity of opinion prevailing among interpreters in regard to this passage is enough to fill the student with despair and to afflict him with intellectual paralysis."

That is lamentably true. But why these endless

interpretations? Just because the interpreters have all gone to this wonderful passage of Scripture with the preconceived notion that the Divine Son never became Man till He became Incarnate. Failing to apprehend His Divine Humanity as Creator, they have gone away into mazes of error in which endless "diversity of opinion" is possible. Recognize the fact that 'the form of God' was 'the *image* of the invisible God' and 'the *firstborn* of all creation,' and then the whole of Paul's teaching in Phil. ii. 5-11 becomes clear and simple. We shall see it to be so, as we proceed.

Consider, *first*, the extraordinary words ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ,—'in the form of God.' *Bishop Lightfoot* acknowledges that they refer to the *pre*-Incarnate Christ. His words are: "It requires that ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων, be referred to a point of time *prior* to the incarnation." He then says concerning the word 'form':

> "It comprises all those *sensible* qualities which, *striking the eye*, lead to the conviction that we *see* such and such a thing."

Having thus defined the apostolic term, he inquires:

> "What meaning must we attach to 'the form of God,' in which our Lord pre-existed?"

And to this great question he replies:

> "*The form of God must apply to the* ATTRIBUTES *of the Godhead.*"

Now, this surely is a very surprising and disappointing answer. *The attributes of the Godhead* are not

visible in themselves, and *apart from embodiment* can never become to finite creatures "the *manifestation* of the *hidden*" or "the *revelation* of the *unseen*," which 'the image of the invisible God' originally was, as the Bishop has already told us in his comments on Col. i. 15. Let this matter be carefully considered, for it is of the utmost moment that it should be clearly understood. 'The *image* of the invisible God' and 'the *form* of God' are synonymous; 'the form' was 'the image.' But if 'form' signifies "attributes"—the attributes of Godhood—then how could it *manifest* the HIDDEN, and *reveal* the UNSEEN? There can be no "*sensible* qualities capable of *striking the eye*" in the attributes of an invisible and Divine Being: they have no 'form,' and therefore cannot be seen. But 'the image of the invisible God' had a form, for He was 'the *firstborn* of all creation,' and very frequently appeared to the patriarchs and others in the days of old, with whom He spake 'face to face, as a man with his friend.' Did he not say regarding Moses, 'the *form* of the Lord doth he *behold*'? (Num. xii. 8). *Dr. Lightfoot* says that "μορφή (form) originally refers *to the organs of sense*." That is true; and if so, how then could it possibly refer to the *Divine* nature of the Lord God, which was and is *invisible?* Not only so, but if 'form' be synonymous with *attributes*, then, as all the Persons of the Godhead have the same attributes, each of them must have 'form,' of which there is no hint in Scripture. The term is applied to the Son in both the Old and New Testaments, and to Him alone. All the declarations of the Bishop on this vital point

are not only mistaken, but mutually contradictory. Unembodied attributes have no 'form,' and 'the form of God' (which was visible) was possessed only by the Son.

In *The Incarnation*, etc. (p. 157), *Bishop Gore* says:

> "Jesus Christ pre-existed in the form of God! The word 'form,' *transferred from physical shape to spiritual type*, describes the permanent characteristics of a thing. Jesus Christ then, in His pre-existent state, was living in the permanent characteristics of the life of God."

What a strangely obscure, inconsequent and impotent conclusion! According to this teaching, 'the *image* of the invisible God' was in no respect different from the invisible God Himself in His nature, but was only and purely Divine. He was originally 'in the *form* of God,' but was just the Son of God still. The word 'form' is thus emptied of all significance, and made merely synonymous with "the permanent characteristics of the life of God," which are purely Divine and invisible. And when the Bishop tells us that "the word 'form' *was transferred from physical shape to spiritual type*," we can only wonder what he means: the language seems to be utterly without significance. But supposing for a moment that such a transference could take place, by whom was it effected? Not by the Lord Himself in Old Testament times, who said to Aaron and Miriam concerning Moses, 'the *form* of the Lord shall he *behold*'! Not by Paul, who declares that 'the form of God' was 'the *image* of the invisible,' and 'the *firstborn* of all creation.' And not by the ascended and glorified Saviour, who said to John, 'To the angel of the

church in Laodicea, write, These things saith the Amen . . . *the beginning of the creation of God.*'

In *The Supremacy of Man* (p. 7), *Dr. John Pulsford* has said, with a far deeper, clearer and truer insight into the meaning of Paul's words:

"The Form of God is the equivalent of His unsearchable Hiddenness. And, without question, every possible idea of God must include essence and form. There must be Invisibility behind the Visibility, to account for the same. And if the Invisibility is to become both objective and operative, it must have its organ. What were the boundless ether, if it were not gathered up and expressed in its own sun? And how could the sun have a universality of operation unless it were in the bosom of the ether and ministered unto by the ether?"

We need not add anything to these most reasonable, logical and convincing words. In their light, the statements of most of our theologians and commentators on 'the form of God' seem to be confused and perplexing in the last degree.

But further light will be thrown upon the remarkable words of the apostle, if we clearly apprehend the significance of the term 'originally.' We do not know why the revisers of the New Testament did not put the significance of this word into the text, seeing that it has a place in the original Greek—'who being originally (*ὑπάρχων*) in the form of God.' This word does not reach back to eternity, but only to the beginning of time, when the Son of God became 'the firstborn of all creation.' He did not possess 'the form of God' from all eternity, because, when Father, Son and Spirit were alone, embodiment and visibility were not needed. But when beings were to be brought into existence, in whose bosoms was to

be Divinely implanted a deep and ineradicable desire to have fellowship with a *Visible* God, then a bodily manifestation became a necessity. And—as we have already seen—there is nothing more certainly taught in the Scriptures than this; that, not from eternity, but from before creation, the Son had a visibility in 'form' which the Father and Spirit did not possess. But they had their visibility in Him, for in Him dwelt then, and dwelleth now, 'all the fulness of the Godhead *bodily*' (Col. ii. 9). *Bishop Lightfoot* says that—

"ὑπάρχων denotes *prior* existence, but not necessarily *eternal* existence."

Just so, and therefore Paul used it in writing of the 'Firstborn' whose 'form' was not eternal. It is wonderful, that this admission on the part of the Bishop did not open his eyes to the mistakenness of his idea that—

"The form of God must apply to the *attributes* of the Godhead,"

for these attributes are *eternal;* and if our apostle had been referring to them, he would not have employed the word ὑπάρχων to describe their origin.

But still further light will be cast on the apostolic phrase 'the form of God' if we carefully consider the extraordinary words which follow it: οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ—'*counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God.*' We prefer the rendering given by the American committee of revisers,—'*counted not the being on an equality with God a thing*

to be grasped.' The former clause speaks of the *visibility* of the *Lord* God, and the latter of His *equality* with the Father. *But the equality was not apparent because of the 'Form';* and this gave to the Visible God the opportunity of manifesting *the lowliness of mind* which is commended by the apostle for the imitation of all true Christians. The equality between the Invisible God and His visible Image was real, *but it was not immediately manifest to created beings.* The very visibility of the Lord might naturally have been regarded as making Him *less than Divine.* Did not Arius and his followers argue that, the Son having been seen by the patriarchs while the Father had not been seen, an Invisible Nature was not only distinct from, but also *higher* than, a nature which was cognizable by the senses? And were not all the apostles Arians, in measure, until the evening of the Passover feast, when they communed with Jesus immediately before His betrayal and crucifixion? '*Show us the Father,* and it sufficeth us,' was their united prayer through the medium of one of their number. And what did Jesus answer? 'Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know Me, Philip? *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*' His request might just as naturally have been made by the first man in Eden, and the Lord—the Visible God—could have given the same reply. He could then have said, 'I and the Father are one'; but the oneness was not manifest, and He made no undue haste to make it manifest. Being lowly in heart, He did not count equality with God '*a thing to be grasped,*' but

was willing to wait for the development of the creature's knowledge concerning Himself and the Father. What a charmingly beautiful thing this non-grasping of equality is seen to be, when rightly apprehended! The humblest Being in the universe is God, and therefore when the Son came as the Creator in human form to reveal the Father, He was clothed with Divine humility. He could then have said—just as truly as afterwards in the days of His flesh—'I am meek and lowly in heart.' Now, what does Bishop Lightfoot say about the non-grasping of equality on the part of 'the form of God'? If he failed rightly to interpret the first clause of the verse, it will not surprise us greatly if he also failed correctly to interpret the second; false premises very naturally lead even great minds to wrong conclusions. We may take the Bishop's comments on the words under consideration as a sample of the opinions of our chief theologians, for they almost all agree. He first defines the apostle's meaning thus:

"Though He pre-existed in the form of God, yet He did not look upon equality with God as a prize which must not slip from His grasp."

And then he explains the definition he has given in these words:

"Though existing before the worlds *in the Eternal Godhead*, yet He did not cling with avidity to the perogatives of His Divine Majesty—did not *display* His equality with God."

A strange explanation! If 'form' be equivalent to *attributes*, and 'the form of God' existed only "in

the eternal Godhead," and therefore was Divine *and Divine only;* then what significance can we attach to the statement, that He did not ambitiously *display* His equality with God? The assertion seems to be utterly meaningless, for what "*display*" could the Son have made of His equality with the Father, when, like the Father, He too was purely Divine? A *personal* manifestation of the Son *as God* to finite creatures (if that had been possible) must also have been a manifestation of the Divine Father, and of His equality with the Father; but a personal manifestation was not possible—and why? because the Son, as a Person of the Godhead, was just as *invisible* as the Father and the Holy Ghost. Or if the manifestation given had not been personal, but only one of *Work or Word*, then *that* manifestation also must have displayed His equality with God. But 'Form' cannot refer to either word or work, because it was a *personal possession* of the Son, and that by which He declared and manifested the Father. Had it been only Divine—as were the attributes of the Godhead—how could it have been a manifestation of the Invisible God? But if, as we believe, 'the image of the invisible God' was *Visible*, and 'the form of God' *Human*, then the words of the apostle are simple and suggestive, beautiful and sublime. As the God-Man, the Creator might very naturally appear to created beings as *inferior* to the Infinite and Invisible Father. This would not be so, when they came truly to know Him; but meanwhile in Divinest humility 'He counted not the being on an equality with God *a thing to be grasped.*'

Therefore, says the apostle, 'Have this mind in you.'

There is another remarkable passage in Hebrews (i. 3), to which we must call the attention of the reader, if only for a moment or two—'Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image (or impress) of His substance.' This is a beautiful expression of the same idea that, in the *image* of God the Invisible Father was made visible. *Bishop Westcott* says on this passage:

"The glory of God finds expression in the Son as its effulgence, and the essence of God finds expression in Him as its type; but neither figure must be pressed to conclusions: the luminous image may be said to have no substantive existence."

It is wonderful how Bishops agree, even while making declarations which are self-contradictory, and these declarations may surely and without offence be thus described. If the Creator, 'through whom God made the worlds' (context), had "no substantive existence," or, in other words, no visible Personality, then how could He be "*the effulgent expression of the Divine glory*," or "*the typical expression of the Divine essence*," or "*the luminous image of the Divine substance*"? It was well for the Bishop to say, that "neither figure can be pressed to conclusions"; for if these figures were thus pressed, they would lead to the very opposite conclusion to that at which he arrived. They can refer only to a *visible being*—'the *image* of the invisible God.'

And now, finally, let us briefly meditate upon the declarations of John in the first chapter of his Gospel, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was

with God, and the Word was God' (John i. 1). We have reserved the consideration of these statements until now, because—in all likelihood—John wrote his Gospel after the Epistles were written and was no doubt familiar with them all. In dealing with the nature of Christ, he was not likely to go over the same ground as Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews had done; and therefore, having emphatically declared that the Logos was 'God,' and 'Creator of all things,' and the Giver of 'life' and 'light' unto men, he hastens on to state the glorious fact that 'the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us,' and also to give a detailed account of much of what Jesus had said and done. Had it lain in the line of his purpose to enlarge on the *pre*-Incarnate nature of his Lord, and to explain the meaning of the term 'Logos,' then doubtless his teaching would have been seen to be in perfect harmony with that of Paul. Unfortunately, the words of Paul have been generally interpreted by those of John, and these again by Greek philosophy, which grievously perverted their meaning. The Logos of John was a Person, but—as *Bishop Gore* has told us—that Person was reduced by the Alexandrian philosophy to

"the Divine *reason or thought*, which is the archetypal *idea* or moulding *principle* of the material world."

Here, verily, was transformation with a vengeance! He who 'was with God and was God,' became in the writings of Philo only an "idea" or "principle" of the Divine mind. In the late *Dr. Liddon's* excellent

book on *The Divinity of our Lord* (p. 230), he thus writes:

"The Divine Logos is God reflected in His own eternal thought: in the Logos, God is His own object."

We see here the baneful effect of Greek philosophy, which led this able writer to express himself in words which (if they have any meaning at all) we fail to apprehend: they seem to make that which is mysterious, an unfathomable mystery. On page 32 he also says:

"Yet the Logos necessarily suggests to our minds, the further idea of communicativeness; the Logos is Speech, as well as Thought. And of His actual self-communication, St. John mentions two phases or stages—the first, Creation; the second, Revelation."

Dealing with the same subject in *The Incarnation*, etc. (p. 69), *Bishop Gore* has thus expressed himself:

"In the Targums, or early Jewish paraphrases on the Old Testament, . . . the Word of God had come to be used personally as almost equivalent to God manifesting Himself, or God in action . . . In the Fourth Gospel also, Logos must be translated not 'reason' but 'word'; and this means, that the phraseology of St. John has its roots, not in Platonic or Stoic idealism, but in the Jewish belief in the Word of God —the manifestation of His will in creation or in revelation."

Now, there are two things in these quotations, which deserve special attention. Take the least important, first. *What was John's conception of the Logos, and how did he come to hold it?* The Logos, to him, was a Person; and also the revealer of another Person, as the word signifies. Just as the body of a man reveals and manifests his spirit, so

likewise did the Logos reveal and manifest God. And John was not left by his Lord to form his own conceptions regarding this great matter, neither wa he indebted for his sublime ideas to the teachings of men. He who lay on the breast of Jesus at the Passover feast in the upper room (like a lovely and sweet-scented blossom on the bosom of God), and who was 'the disciple whom Jesus loved,' because he was the most loving disciple and therefore the most Christlike of them all,—he did not need to go either to Greek philosophy or Alexandrian idealism to learn about the nature of his Lord. He had had better teachers than Plato and Philo. In the outer circle of the twelve apostles there was an inner circle of three—Peter, James and John—and the loftiest writer of the three was the last, not merely because he lived the longest and had thereby the opportunity of acquiring a deeper insight into spiritual realities than his brethren; but also and chiefly because he was the most spiritually minded of them all, and therefore received in largest measure the inspiration and enlightenment of the Holy Ghost. It is positively distressing to see how the words and teachings of John have been interpreted in the earthly light of mere philosophy, thereby testing and judging Divine revelations by the paltry theorizings and superficial speculations of men. In his comments on Col. i. 15, 16, *Bishop Lightfoot* says:

"The Alexandrian phraseology (in describing the Logos) as a providential preparation for the teaching of the Gospel, wil afford important aid in the understanding of the apostoli writings."

We believe, on the contrary, that that phraseology exercised a very misleading influence, and that the apostolic writings would have been much more quickly, widely and correctly understood had Alexandrian Judaism never existed. It taught, for instance, as the Bishop has told us, that "Logos includes all modes, by which God makes Himself known to man." Is that true? Nature is a mode by which God makes Himself known to man, but Nature is never called Logos in Scripture. Revelation is a mode by which God makes Himself known to man, but the Bible never speaks of itself as Logos; it is the *written* Word, but not the *Personal* Word. *The term is applied to the pre-Incarnate Christ, and to Him alone.* He only was the Logos, the Personal Revealer of God. We are glad that *Bishop Gore* recognized and acknowledged what *Dr. Liddon* apparently did not see, or at least has not stated, that "in the Jewish Targums, the Word of God had come to be used personally, as almost equivalent to God *manifesting Himself*, or God in action." And yet he has failed to deduce any practical conclusion therefrom, but goes back to the standpoint of *Dr. Liddon*, and says, that the declaration of God by the Logos was "the manifestation of His will *in Creation or in Revelation.*" This is the *second* point to be noticed, and it is vastly important. It is true that in "creation" and "revelation" the Logos has given an exhibition of the Divine power and wisdom, goodness and "will"; but is it right to call a manifestation of attributes and qualities a manifestation of *Himself*, or a revelation of Divine thoughts, a revelation of

the Father? Does a watchmaker manifest *himself* in the watch that he makes, or a musician in the piece of music he has composed? There is in every work, either human or Divine, a *partial* revelation of the worker; but it would be an utter abuse of both thought and language, to call that a manifestation of the worker himself. Neither Creation, nor Revelation, nor both together, could possibly be an adequate and satisfying manifestation of God.

Take Revelation first. So far as we know there was no Book-Revelation of God in the world until many centuries after the creation of man, and that Revelation was sent to sin-corrupted and guilty creatures. Had humanity never fallen, it is probable that it would never have required a Bible at all. And why? Because Divine Revelations were given to the first of our race *directly from the living lips of the God-Man.* The Logos in the beginning did not either manifest Himself or reveal the Father through the medium of a *written* Revelation, and, but for sin, such a revelation might never have been necessary. When at length it was Divinely bestowed, it was given to one nation only. But the natural religions of all nations give embodiment, in greater or less fulness—though in corrupted forms—to the traditions of Eden and the early ages of the world. Especially was this true of Brahmanism, in its first and purest state. In proof of this, take the following lines from the 121st hymn of the 10th Mandala in *Rig-veda*, probably written 1500 years B.C.:

> "Him let us praise; the golden Child that rose
> In the beginning, who was born the lord—

> The one sole lord of all that is—who made
> The earth, and formed the sky, who giveth life,
> Who giveth strength, whose bidding gods revere,
> Whose hiding-place is immortality ;
> Whose shadow death ; who by His might is King
> Of all the breathing, sleeping, waking world."

If the writer of these astonishing lines had been acquainted with the words of Paul in Col. i. 15, 16; and with those of John in the opening verses of his Gospel, he could hardly have put them into poetic form more clearly than he has done. But they were not then in existence, and therefore he could not know them. How then did he obtain his beliefs? He must have got them either from tradition, or by the speculations of his own mind or from the speculations of others. The scripturalness of his ideas, though corrupted in measure, impel us to believe that they had descended to him from the earliest ages, when the Visible God frequently appeared unto men and was their supreme Teacher. It is not unlikely that every natural religion in the world, is largely indebted to the Divinely Human revelations which were given to mankind in the morning of time.

Then look at Nature, as a manifestation of God. 'The heavens are the Lord's, but the earth hath He given to the children of men.' And what is the earth to them? It was Divinely meant to be their birthplace, nursery, school, library, playground, home and temple. Think of it, as a home. How beautiful it was!—roofed over with the eternal blue of the ethereal sky—lighted with the glorious sunshine of day and the moonbeams and star-rays of

night—curtained with the ever-changing and always charming clouds—refreshed with breezes pure and sweet as the breath of God—watered by the rains and flowing rivers—carpeted with refreshing verdure —adorned with beautiful flowers lovely as the robes of angels—scented with delicious odours, and full of the melodies of singing birds, the manifold voices of winds and waters, and all moving things. The natural heavens continually ministered to the earth, that the earth in turn might minister to humanity; and in all its varied operations and manifold results, it was ever rendering service to mankind. The fields and forests, meadows and mountains, rills and rivers, lakes and seas, were Divinely appointed servants to the children of the Eternal Father. But what is any home—however beautiful and happy it may be —*without the visible presence of father and mother?* It is of their creation, and may be full of the tokens of their thoughtfulness and love, but without their personal presence the house is not a Home, and the children are practically orphanized. In like manner this world could never have been a real home to the human family—even in a sinless condition—apart from the visible presence of the Divine Man (the Creator) to reveal and manifest the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God. Judging from what the Scriptures tell us, such revelations and manifestations were abundant in Eden; so much so, indeed, that the happy dwellers there were *familiar* with the Visible God; and if only they had chosen to be loyal and obedient, and thereby formed and developed a true moral character, they would have enjoyed with

ever-increasing fulness the visible presence and face-to-face fellowship of their Creator. The recorded words spoken by the Elohim to the sinless dwellers in Eden, are few in number; but the impression they leave upon the mind is, that many more were spoken. Be that as it may, He instructed them.

But even after the Fall, He graciously continued to give them, *in measure*, and according to their need, revelations and manifestations as before. And all along the period of the Old Testament dispensations they were given from time to time, but with the greatest frequency and fulness, to Abraham, Moses and the chief men of Israel, by whom the elect people were instrumentally taught, guided and governed. Through the revelations given and the personal manifestations granted, the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God were still revealed. Surely, His *Fatherhood* was manifested, in the disciplinary treatment He gave to the first transgressors—in His dealings with Cain—in the sending of the flood—in the call of Abraham—in the great commission which He gave to Moses—in the deliverance of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt—in the giving of the law from Mount Sinai—in the guidance He vouchsafed to them through 'the terrible wilderness,' and in all His wise and gracious dealings with them in the land of promise. And surely, the Divine *Motherhood* was also manifested, when the Lord God made coats of skins and clothed the parents of our race when the sense of guilt had made them conscious of their nakedness—when He said to Hagar as she sat and wept in her loneliness and desolation in the wilder-

ness of Beersheba, 'What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is; arise, lift him up, and hold him in thine hand, for I will make him a great nation'—when His chosen people on many occasions were pardoned for their transgressions, and when, because of their wilfulness and perversity, He was impelled to exclaim with a voice full of tears, 'Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me'—when He cried to them in their moral wanderings, 'Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Return unto Me, for I have redeemed you'—when, after their return, He rejoicingly said, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee'; 'can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, these may forget, yet will I not forget thee; behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands': 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted': 'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; and when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.' We can hear the very beatings of the motherly heart of God, in these thrillingly pathetic, tender and exulting utterances. But all these

wonderful declarations and pleadings would have lost half their force and significance had they not come to the Jewish people from the Divine Man who had been familiarly known, if not by themselves, yet by their fathers in the olden time: just as the words of Jesus would not be to us what they are, had they not been personally and immediately spoken unto men by Himself. But the apostolic Fathers saw in the old Theophanies only apparitional appearances, or worse still, mere angelic agency. In their laudable desire to uphold the Divine dignity they really lowered it, and that to an enormous and deplorable extent. Their notions of dignity were formed by the pagan imperialism of Rome, and not by the Divinely-beautiful spectacle of the loving father and mother in the midst of their family. The highest greatness of God does not consist of almightiness and unapproachable majesty, but of tenderness, lowliness and love—a love which 'delighteth in mercy.' The Logos, as the Divine Man, was a 'God nigh at hand,' revealing 'a God afar off.' He has ever been to all created beings—constantly in heaven and frequently upon earth—the Visible God, and the grand connecting link between the Infinite and Invisible Father and all His finite children, both angelic and human.

Mediatorship necessitated both embodiment and visibility, that, standing midway, as its were, between God and men, the God-Man might act as the Father's Representative, and ever be able to say, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.' *Man craves, not only for the spiritual vision of the unseen God,*

but for a face-to-face sight of a Visible God. This desire has been and is universal, as the idolatries of tribes and nations abundantly testify. It is the real source and secret of the widespread and age-to-age enduring service of idols. However ignorant and degraded men may be, they are impelled to worship, and they always desire to worship, a Visible God. Not only so, but their visible God is always *human*, for, as some one has truly said, "Man cannot otherwise conceive of God than as after his own image." Indeed, it is impossible to think of God at all *without giving Him a human form.* All the idols of heathendom to-day are more or less human in appearance, and even the highest gods of the ancient Grecian mythology were only men magnified. A missionary correspondent some time ago sent to *The Christian World* "Interesting Items from India," and one was as follows:

"We see the insufficiency of mere Theism, as propounded by the Brahmo Somaj movement, to satisfy the emotional nature of the Hindu; and how his philosophical nature must ever turn from all its abstractions to that popular side of his religion which, with all its degrading worship, enshrines the idea of an Incarnation, *and witnesses to the instinctive craving of the human heart to see a humanized God.*"

From whence did this profound, universal and instinctive desire to see God, come into the human heart? Did sin create it? Not so; sin corrupted and weakened it, but could never have given it birth. It is not the nature of sin, to enkindle a longing after God. How then did it arise? The universality of its experience and its instinctive nature, prove that

it was Divinely implanted; and being so, it was meant to be met and everlastingly satisfied. It *was* satisfied in the beginning by the personal and visible comings of the Creator to the primal pair, before Moral Evil was humanly and wickedly permitted to alienate man from God. It was satisfied in Old Testament times by the frequent appearances of the Divine Man and His personal communings with the patriarchs and leaders of the Hebrew people. It was satisfied during the earthly ministry of the Incarnate Christ, for did He not say to the disciples, 'he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father'? It is satisfied now, through the testimony which the four Gospels give of His words and works, life and labours 'in the days of His flesh,' and also by the assurance which we have that the glorified Saviour is seen and worshipped by angels as the God-Man in the heavens to-day, and by disembodied human spirits in the Intermediate State. And is it not true that, just in proportion as Christian men and women now receive the Invisible Spirit of God within them, they ardently long to see the Visible God without them, and cry, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly'? The great hope set before them in the Gospel is the hope of His *appearing*, and the very highest delight of heaven shall be realized '*when they see His face*.' The more vivid and pure their spiritual vision of the Invisible God becomes, the deeper and more intense is their longing to be with the Visible God, that they may '*see Him as He is*.' The *faith* of all believers is largely grounded on the *sight* which the first Christians obtained of the Risen Saviour; and their faith

will be crowned and their hearts fully satisfied—not by spiritual vision or a perfected trust, but—by an immediate and *face-to-face sight* of the Divine Man, in Whose presence they shall eternally and rejoicingly abide. A pure spirituality of nature has no place in the purpose of the Eternal Father in relation to His children, for visible embodiment is the end of all His ways. Man was created a threefold being, body, soul and spirit; and had he never sinned he would never have become a disembodied spirit through dying, nor ceased to be the tripartite being which he was at first. Therefore a bodily resurrection is a necessity, that his nature may be perfected; and the glorious promise of the Saviour is this: 'I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also.' And we shall be made 'like Him,' when we 'see Him even as He is.' What a glorious destiny! Here and now, the genuine lovers of Jesus often fervently cry, Oh to be like Christ! Day by day, while they remain on earth, that God-honouring and Christ-glorifying prayer may be more and more fully answered; and in the great hereafter it shall be perfectly and progressively fulfilled for evermore. And thus the whole being shall be eternally spiritualized and glorified, and attain the realization of the great purpose for which it was created and for which it was redeemed.

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF MAN

BEFORE proceeding to consider the *Incarnation* of the God-Man—its necessity, nature, purpose and results—let us try to obtain a clear apprehension of *the nature of man—first*, as he was in his original innocency; *second*, as he now is in his sinful, corrupt and dying condition; and *third*, as he shall one day become in his resurrected, spiritualized and glorified state. The more perfectly we understand our own nature in these different aspects, the better able we shall be to apprehend the nature of Christ in its original, Incarnate and glorified conditions.

'The *Lord* God formed man of the dust of the ground'—whether by a creative act or an evolutionary process is of little consequence—'and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.' From the moment that the Divine breath inbreathed into him the very life of God he was a son of the Eternal Father. Luke calls Adam, 'the son of God' (Luke iii. 38). The Creator was the embodied *Godhead*, and man a *triune* being like Himself—'spirit, soul and body' (1 Thess. v. 23). It is probable that the very first object upon which he looked was the God-Man—his

Creator; and if so, he would gaze into His perfectly beautiful and love-illumined face with a calm and satisfied gladness. Tertullian says, that "God, in forming the first man, *took for pattern the future Man —Christ;*" and it is truly astonishing how many great theologians and commentators have accepted his dictum, or, if not directly affected by his teaching, have held the same belief. They have manifestly overlooked the plain declarations of Scripture. The nature of man, instead of having a forward, had a backward look. It was not made in the image and likeness of a coming Redeemer, but in the image and likeness 'of Him who *created* him' (Gen. i. 26, 27). Man was not intended to sin; and had he never fallen, no Redeemer or redemption would ever have been required. Instead of his being created after the pattern of the Incarnate Christ, Christ—when He came—was formed 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' (Rom. viii. 3). Man was made in the image and likeness of his Creator, and *corrupted* them; and then the Creator was made in the likeness of the fallen creature, that He might *redeem* him. All such teaching as that of Tertullian on this matter, is wholly mistaken and unscriptural.

What sort of physical nature, then, did the first man and father of the human family receive from his Creator? It was not a *spiritual* body—like those of the angels and like that of the Lord God—but *a natural body of flesh and blood.* Scripture is clear about this. When woman was brought to man by the Creator, Adam said, 'This is now *bone of my bone*, and *flesh of my flesh*' (Gen. ii. 23). The Lord

said unto Cain, 'What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's *blood* crieth unto Me from the ground' (Gen. iv. 10).

But, the body of man was not Divinely intended to be always flesh and blood. This is a declaration which may startle our readers, not only because it is a remarkable statement in itself, but also and chiefly because the truth it embodies has never been either apprehended or taught by the Christian Church. And yet, it seems to be very distinctly and definitely revealed in the Scriptures. In the light of their teachings, let us carefully consider the matter. Though made of the dust of the ground, the human body had been fashioned into the likeness of Him by whom it was formed; and having within it no taint of impurity, and no element of decay, it was designed and fitted to live for ever. Though not inherently immortal, it was made for Immortality. But it could become immortal, only by being changed into *a spiritual body*. This great change was Divinely intended, and if man had only retained his pristine purity, maintained his primary relationship with the Creator, and formed and developed a holy and God-like moral character—an upward pathway of unending evolution and progress, ever-increasing wisdom and power, and ever-deepening blessedness lay before the whole of his threefold nature. First the natural and then the spiritual, was God's method in creation. If it be true now that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God' (1 Cor. xv. 50), we may be perfectly sure that it was equally true in Eden. A flesh-and-blood body was neither

designed nor fitted to ascend from the earth into the heavens, and attain the glorious destiny for which it had been created. Intelligent readers will recognize the truth of this, without any further enlargement on our part.

A great change was necessary—*how was it to be effected?* Not by miracle, but by a natural and gradual process of transformation and development. Had man resisted temptation, shut his heart to Moral Evil and opened it Godwards to the inflowing of all good, not only would his higher nature have been continually and eternally spiritualized, but his lower nature also. The Divine Spirit ever descending into the human spirit, and from thence into the soul and the body, the entire being would have been uplifted and ennobled, and made more and more spiritual and beautiful for ever. Under this process—assisted probably by the eating of the fruit of 'the tree of life'—the body would have been gradually and progressively purified and spiritualized until it became *altogether spiritual*, and as such incorruptible and immortal. Even now in its sinful and corrupted condition, the body of a man will be visibly spiritualized, *in measure*, if only he himself be truly and persistently spiritually minded. The lower part of his nature is largely influenced by the higher. The body shall not attain to anything through Redemption and Resurrection which it would not have reached by this natural process of exaltation, had it never been corrupted and made mortal by the destructive power of sin. And while the lower part of his nature was thus being changed,

the higher parts also would have been growing up into the fulness of the stature of the perfect man. And when the process was completed, so far as this world permitted it, then he would have passed into the heavens by translation—like Enoch and Elijah—yet naturally and not by miracle as they did, there to continue his upward course of development and progress for evermore. We are told that he was made 'for a little while lower than the angels' (Heb. ii. 7). Now, what is the nature of angels? Says one, "So far as they belong to a type, the angels are human." Undoubtedly! They resemble human beings, and are frequently called 'men' both in the Old Testament and in the New. They, too, were doubtless created with flesh-and-blood bodies; but they had risen by development out of the natural into the spiritual and celestial condition (1 Cor. xv. 40); and, therefore, when man was made with a flesh-and-blood constitution he was 'for a little while' in a lower condition than that to which they had attained. But if he had pursued the upward course of obedience in which they had walked with concentration and persistency, he, too, at length would have risen out of the natural into the spiritual state, and become '*equal unto the angels*' —an equality of physical nature and social condition to which all saved persons shall attain; for 'in the resurrection they are as the angels of God in heaven' (Matt. xxii. 30). Although it does not lie directly in the line of our argument, we cannot refrain at this point from correcting a common error regarding the angels. It is generally believed that

they are separate creations, and are all of the male sex, if they have sex at all. *Principal Edwards* says in *The God-Man* (p. 13), "Man has *race* existence, *the angels have only individual existence.*" But where, in the Scriptures, is this idea either expressed or implied? We appeal to them. Instead of teaching that the angels are all distinct individualities, they tell us plainly that their varied races are *family* races like the human. Paul said, 'For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every *family* (Greek, *fatherhood*) in heaven and on earth is named' (Eph. iii. 14, 15). Other Scriptures might be quoted, but this will suffice. There are no races in the heavens to-day but the angelic races, and the apostle tells us that they are '*family*' races, and that the head of every race is a 'fatherhood'—a word which would be an entire misnomer if applied to beings who have "only individual existence." The principle of sex, so far as we know, is absolutely universal, and all God's children are a family.

The necessary *trial* which the Creator put upon the primal pair by morally fencing the Tree of Testing in the midst of the garden, was not a temptation, but just the reverse. Temptation is an enticement to wrong-doing; but instead of enticing them to eat the forbidden fruit, He warned them against it—'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.' But the trial necessarily and lovingly made by God was turned into a temptation by the great deceiver, who said: 'Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye

shall be as God knowing good and evil.' It is probable that this was the very thought which led Satan himself to his fall, and therefore he made use of it in tempting others. The striking words of the prophet are remarkably applicable to the first transgressor:

'How art thou fallen from heaven, O day star, son of the morning! . . . Thou saidst in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . . *I will be like the Most High:* yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the uttermost parts of the pit' (Isa. xiv. 12-15).

In these wonderful days of enlightenment, culture and progress, many have reduced the personal devil to a mere principle of evil; but Jesus Christ said concerning him (and we are old-fashioned enough to believe what He said, rather than the empty and flippant theorizings of would-be "thinkers"):

'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof' (John viii. 44).

These words certainly teach the following facts: *first*, that the devil is a person—'he'; *second*, that at one time he was good—'he stood not in the truth'; *third*, that as a fallen being he became a destroyer—'he was a murderer from the beginning'; *fourth*, that he destroys by deceiving—'he is a liar'; *fifth*, that he was the *first* to deceive others—'he is a liar, and the *father* of lies'; *sixth*, that all human beings who cherish his spirit are his children—'ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your

father it is your will to do.' *The origin of evil* has always been a mystery, and often a perplexity to thoughtful minds; but these words of our Lord bring us as near to its origin as we may ever be able to come, at least on earth and in our present state of existence. Evil had its origin *in the bosom of one individual*, who is here called '*the* devil,' and elsewhere 'the *prince* of the devils,' and 'the wicked *one*.' The mystery still remains how evil could originate in a God-created being who was not impelled to sin by any evil inward tendency, nor by any temptation externally presented; but, at any rate, we stand immediately in front of the mystery when we know that the very fountain and beginning of evil was in one person. He it was who said to the first of our race, 'Ye shall not surely die'—a falsehood worthy of the father of lies! The lie was an enticement, and therefore a temptation. The tempted ones had power to resist it; and if only they had used the power, they would have come off 'more than conquerors,' and been greatly blessed by the fiery trial through which they had passed, for 'Blessed is he that endureth temptation.' But, alas! they did not resist it, but, when led into the presence of temptation, yielded to its power. And the results in each of them were terrible. The *spirit* lost its life and harmonious relationship with God; the *soul* (including mind and heart) was darkened and defiled; and the *body* became corrupted, disordered, and disorganized. It not only continued to be a flesh-and-blood organization, but also became the subject of weakness and pain,

disease and death. The blood was poisoned, the flesh tainted, and all its senses and energies weakened and injured. And these were but foretastes of the innumerable miseries and madnesses which would distress and distract their posterity for ages, as weary and footsore they travel onward and downward to death and the grave. But may we not believe that it is for the ultimate good of the whole moral universe that evil exists, and also that it is being allowed a long opportunity to do its best, or its worst, for humanity? The history of mankind is giving abundant evidence of the exceeding sinfulness and folly of self-will, and the utter inability of man to be his own saviour; it is also showing by many infallible proofs that 'God is Love,' and that 'His mercy endureth for ever.' If these great truths can only be effectively taught to the entire universe by the prolonged and sore travail of humanity, it is surely well that it should be Divinely permitted and its final results everlastingly chronicled in the literature of all the worlds.

Let us now inquire, *What are the present effects of the Gospel of Christ in the nature of a true believer?* First of all, by the belief of the Truth as it is in Jesus, and the acceptance of Christ Himself as a personal Saviour, the *spirit* is quickened into life. It 'passes from death unto life' (John v. 24), and becomes the conscious possessor of that life which Jesus came to give and to give with ever-increasing abundance for evermore (John x. 10). That life is the very life of God—the Life of Love—than which there is no higher life in the universe. It is spiritual

in its nature, Divine in its quality and eternal in duration (1 John v. 11-13). The Gospel also blesses the *soul*, as well as the spirit. It enlightens the mind, purifies, enlarges and comforts the heart, and makes all their thoughts and affections, purposes and desires increasingly Christian. And it blesses the *body* too, in measure, by cooling its passions and regulating all its appetites, thereby purifying the blood and healing and strengthening the flesh. But it cannot *wholly* deliver the flesh from decay and death—and why? Because these are the ultimate effects of sin and the Divine penalty of guilt, and therefore cannot be escaped. The Creator said, 'dying, thou shalt die,' and His word cannot be broken. The life of the *spirit* died when man sinned; and therefore no human being is an inheritor of spiritual life through the natural birth of the flesh. 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again' (John iii. 6, 7). The true Christian has passed through this new birth, and is once more a child of God through faith in Christ. The faith he exercised naturally developed into love—love to Christ and to the Father who sent Him—and this love is true life, and *eternal*, both in quality and duration. 'The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' It is 'eternal,' because it is God's own life in us—the Father's life quickened in His children. But his *body* has not yet paid the penalty of sin, and therefore it must die. 'Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death

passed unto all men, for that all have sinned' (Rom. v. 12). The present condition of every Christian, therefore, is this: his higher nature, which was dead, has been quickened into newness of life; while his lower nature still remains under 'the law of sin,' and must pay the penalty of death. Paul states the truth briefly and clearly when he says, 'If Christ be in you, the body is dying because of sin; but the spirit lives because of righteousness' (Rom. viii. 10).

But if the spirit of the believer in Christ has passed from death unto life—life spiritual and eternal—the *body* also in due time shall likewise pass from death unto life—the life of Immortality. The salvation of the higher nature ensures the salvation of the lower also. 'Now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead' (1 Cor. xv. 20, 21). 'If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies' (Rom. vii. 11). But as in the ancient times, so now, 'Some one may say, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come?' and no better answer can be given than the one which satisfied the gigantic mind and heart of Paul, and which has comforted millions of bereaved and broken hearts since his day, 'There is a natural body, and there is also a spiritual body. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural: then that which is spiritual.' The body

'sown in corruption, is raised in incorruption: sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: sown in weakness, it is raised in power: sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body' (1 Cor. xv. 42-44). And this spiritual body is the true physical nature of man.

CHAPTER IV

THE INCARNATION OF THE DIVINE MAN

Civilization and progress have done great things for humanity. Industry, commerce and education have brought manifold comforts and blessings to men; but all of them are earthly in their origin and nature, and can minister only to that natural life which is transitory and perishing. It is an universal law that nothing can rise above its own level, or produce an influence greater than itself. Nature lies under the law of decay, and therefore all its products must die. It is true that it perpetuates itself by constant renewals, and that humanity shares with it in this form of immortality; for though men die, the human race continues to live. Nations perish, but civilization remains and advances. The philosophy of Greece and the institutions of Rome survive, though the peoples who created them have passed away like the flowers of a summer that is gone. The physical life of every human being is sustained by constant renewal, but there is ever the progress towards decay and dissolution; and when at length old age comes, no temperance in diet, no husbanding of strength, and no amount of care will save any

one from death to which everything mortal is appointed.

Nothing less and nothing else than a *Divine* Redemption, could bring to humanity the salvation it required; and that great and glorious Redemption was provided. The fall of man, did not take God by surprise. He foresaw it from eternity, and in the Father's gracious purpose His own beloved Son was 'foreknown, indeed, before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake' (1 Pet. i 20). And from the day that man sinned, the Creator began to speak and act *as His Saviour*. The Lord God was the Elohim as Creator, and then the Jehovah as Redeemer. He bears many names, and every one of them is significant. It was He who announced in Eden, that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. It was He who clothed the first transgressors with the skins of beasts, after they had fallen into the *animal* sphere of existence. It was He who gave the great commission to Moses, to go down into Egypt and deliver the children of Abraham from the hand of Pharaoh. It was He who led them through the Red Sea as on dry land, and afterwards preserved and protected, educated and disciplined them through all the long period of their wilderness wanderings. It was He who established them in the land of promise, and prospered and blessed them there. It was He who delivered them on many occasions from the hands of their enemies, and brought them back again into the land of their fathers when their long exile in

Babylon had served its end. It was He who along all the period of the old dispensation was the Guide and Guardian of His people, and who constantly cared for and kept them as the apple of His eye. But all these redemptive dealings with individuals and a nation, were superficial and limited. They neither effected a complete salvation from personal sin, nor provided redemption for the race. They were, therefore, only foretastes and prophecies of these great and universal blessings.

Why was Redemption necessary? It was absolutely necessary, because both the nature and character of man had been ruined—not by necessity or accident, but—by intelligent and wilful wrongdoing. He sinfully brought upon himself a great curse—a curse which corrupts and destroys the whole of his threefold nature, and develops a moral character which is impure and defective. He is spiritually dead, morally unclean, mentally dark and physically mortal; and these are all the outcome of a voluntary disobedience. He has violated the Divine Law, which is unchangeable (being perfect), and therefore the natural effects are certain and enduring. They can neither be evaded nor set aside. Both the cause and its results are irremediable, so far as man himself is concerned. It is not possible for him, by his own unaided efforts, to rise up either out of sin or out of the terrible condition into which sin has brought him. No conceivable amount of acquired strength, knowledge, culture, or refinement, could ever evolve spiritual life out of that which is carnal; neither could they perfectly enlighten the mind,

or purify the heart, or lift up the body out of the grasp of death into the possession and enjoyment of an immortal existence. Therefore Revelation and Redemption, Renewal and Restoration were all needed; and if ever they were to come to him, they could come only from God. And God, in infinite lovingkindness and compassion, graciously bestowed them.

By whom was the Redemption of humanity to be wrought out? Not by man himself, nor by any created being in the universe, could such a stupendous work be accomplished. But help was laid upon One 'mighty to save,' even the Son of the Eternal Father and the Creator of all things. He was the Head of the human race—'the Head of every man is Christ.' When the creature fell, the great Creator took his fall to heart; even as the folly or wickedness of a child, chills and crushes the parental spirit. The sin of man became the cross of his Creator and the grief of God. And because the Creator was also the Mediator and responsible to the Father for the success of His creative work, when that work was corrupted and spoiled by the beings He had made, what more natural and beautiful than that He Himself should become its Redeemer. His love impelled Him to pity and to save, and therefore He is able to say to every ransomed sinner, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.'

But now, take special note of this:—The original Humanity of the Divine Son *being spiritual in its nature*, it was not possible for Him in that Humanity

to work out the redemption of the fallen race—and why? Because 'the form of God' *could neither suffer nor die;* and as death is the penal effect of sin, it was impossible to take away sin except by suffering its penalty. The truth may thus be stated:

> As 'Form of God' He could not die,
> Nor take the sinner's place;
> Therefore in flesh and blood He came,
> To save our ruined race.

The effect ceases, only when the cause is removed. God said that the sinner must die, and His word cannot be broken. There is nothing arbitrary in this, for while Death is the penalty of sin, it is also its *natural* effect. If therefore the Creator of man was to become his Redeemer, it was absolutely necessary that He should have a body prepared for Him that could both suffer and die. 'A body hast Thou prepared Me' (Heb. x. 5). 'We have been sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all' (Heb. x. 10). 'This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin, for ever sat down on the right hand of God' (Heb. x. 12).

What then was the Incarnation? A very extraordinary answer has been given by many theologians —both ancient and modern—to this great question. It was originated, as *Dr. Edwards* tells us in *The God-Man* (pp. 94, 95), by one of the Fathers:

> "The doctrine that God's idea of man is realized in Christ was first explicitly taught by Theodore of Mopsuestia. It forms the foundation of his Christology."

We are not surprised. The most of the absurd notions which have been held concerning the nature

of Christ, were originated by the Fathers; and if only these notions were fortunate enough to find favour with a few of the leading theologians of the day, then they were generally accepted by preachers and people and propagated everywhere throughout the Church. And many of these, alas! continue to be believed to the present hour. One of the most unscriptural of them all, is this: That the Incarnation was the descent of Deity into Humanity for a *twofold* purpose—first, *to crown and consummate creation, and then to redeem mankind.*

Bishop Gore says (p. 43):

"If then we speak of the Incarnation as *the crown of natural development in the universe* and in accordance with its law, we are not using a language new to Christianity."

We humbly venture to reply that if this language, and the idea it embodies, are not new to theology, they are certainly new to the Scriptures and altogether contrary to their teachings. They declare that the creative work of the Lord God was '*finished*' when man was made, and that He rested on the seventh day in complacent satisfaction because He saw that the whole of His work was 'very good' (Gen. ii. 1). That *finished* creation needed no "crown," but the crown of a natural development. But sin corrupted the whole of God's work, and put a stop to its proper development. The progress of humanity in sin is not a natural development, but altogether *un*natural and abnormal; therefore the race required to be ransomed and renewed, that it might be restored to a truly *natural* condition. The work of Redemption could be accomplished only by

the Creator, and for the doing of that work He needed to become Incarnate in flesh and blood. This, we apprehend, is the language of Christianity and the teaching of the Bible, and these are wholly opposed to the statement of *Bishop Gore*. When the true doctrine of the Incarnation is not understood, endless figments of the imagination are possible and may probably be widely and persistentiy believed, however extraordinary and unscriptural they may be. And to show that the idea of the Incarnation being the crown and consummation of Creation was not a passing thought in his mind, the Bishop says, on pp. 52, 53:

"Let me summarize my preliminary contention. Read then, I would say, the book of Nature, which is God's book: read especially its later chapters, when moral beings appear upon the scene: you find it *a plot without a dénoûment, a complication without a solution, a first volume which demands a second.* Study the Christ. He appears as the second volume of the Divine Word, *in which the threads are being disentangled.*"

Yes, truly! "the threads were disentangled" by the Saviour, because *sin* had mingled and confused them; but sin was not a part of the creation, nor in any way desired or designed by God; and had it never entered into the world through wilful and intelligent disobedience to the Divine commands, no *confusion* would have arisen, and no redemptive work of *disentanglement* been required. To go back to the beginning, before sin had found an entrance into the human heart, and declare concerning the *finished* creation over which the Creator rejoiced, that it was "a plot without a *dénoûment*, a complication without

a solution, a first volume which demands a second," is very surprising. The entire conception is a misapprehension, and has arisen out of the failure to recognize in the Creator—the God-Man—the crown and consummation of the creation which He had brought into existence.

In the *Outline of Christian Theology* (pp. 302, 303), Dr. Clarke says:

"The Incarnation is known to us as an element in God's work of salvation from sin. 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' and we easily infer that *sin was the suggesting cause of the Incarnation.* But questions arise. Was sin an indispensable antecedent to this closest approach of God to mankind? Was this manner of approach to His creatures suggested to God by the perversion and ruin of humanity? or was it an original thought of God, a part of the very idea of creating man in His own likeness? *Would God have entered humanity if there had been no sin, simply because it was humanity?* The question may perhaps be called a merely theoretical one, since we do not know that God thought of humanity as a coming race, without thinking also of sin as the coming act and character. Yet we may fairly ask whether, so far as we can judge, we may hope to understand incarnation better by associating it with the thought of sin, or with the thought of humanity in its relation to God. If we associate it with sin, it will stand in our thoughts as purely a remedial work. If we associate it with the relation of humanity to God, vistas of larger significance will open to us, inspiring though they end in mystery. The Scriptures do not directly answer the question, and we cannot give an answer in which speculation has no part. But Christian thought does not seem to rest satisfied without recognizing a purpose of entrance to humanity in the original thought of God concerning man. God made this act possible when He created man, and it is hard to think that the very idea of man in His mind did not include it. If we contemplate the Incarnation until its rich spiritual significance is deeply felt, it will seem to be the crown of glory that

humanity is by its very nature fitted to wear; and it will be hard to believe that this nearest and Divinest approach of God would never have occurred if man had been what he ought to be. When once this great work of God has taken the place in our thoughts that it deserves, *we can scarcely rest without acknowledging that it was a part of the counsel of God for man as man.*" [The italics are ours.]

The opinions here expressed by Dr. Clarke, are similar to those given by many other theologians in our own and other lands; and yet we do not hesitate to say, that they are grounded on a mistaken apprehension of the plain declarations of the sacred Scriptures.

Dr. Clarke inquires: "*Would God have entered humanity if there had been no sin, simply because it was humanity?*" And he answers his own question in these words: "We can scarcely rest without acknowledging that it was a part of the counsel of God for man as man."

Rightly to understand this great and important matter, notice *first*, that the Scriptures always speak of the Incarnation as necessitated by sin. *Second*, they never refer to an Incarnation in flesh and blood, apart from sin. And *third*, they tell us very definitely that *the Son of God entered humanity before the advent of sin:* 'The Son of His love . . . who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation' (Col. i. 13, 15).

'*Image*' refers to *a Visible Being*, and '*Firstborn*' implies *a new beginning*, just as 'the firstborn from the dead' in verse 18, also describes a new beginning. Now, these two facts do not apply to the eternal Christ, the Divine Son of the Divine Father. But they do apply to, and are gloriously descriptive of,

'the Elohim,' 'the Lord God,' the 'I Am,' and the 'Jehovah.' He was the Creator of all things, the Visible God, the Divine Man, the Teacher and Guide of the patriarchs and prophets of the old dispensations. But when He thus entered into humanity and became the Divine Man, His humanity was not flesh and blood, as it was in His Incarnate condition, but a perfectly *spiritual* humanity such as He now possesses in the heavens of God. This is the teaching of God's Word, and it is wholly different from the speculations of Dr. Clarke and those of many other theologians. They ask: "*Would God have entered humanity if there had been no sin, simply because it was humanity?*" Yes, certainly, and why? Because humanity needed a Visible God to reveal the invisible God, and to act as the immediate Guide and Instructor of our race. Therefore the 'Image' of God was '*the Firstborn of all* CREATION'—'the *beginning* of the creation of God.'

The following declaration was just as true in the beginning of human history, as it was after the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem:

> "Exclude the Representative Man from nature, the Son of God from creation, and the universe has no ethical end and teleological purpose."

Nay, more! these words may be specially emphasized in relation to Creation, and for this reason, that but for sin the Incarnation would not have been necessary and would never have taken place; and therefore to regard the coming of Christ in the 'flesh' as "the crown and consummation of creation," is a gigantic error.

Again, then, we inquire, *What was the Incarnation?* It was not the descent of Deity into Humanity—as is generally believed—but *the coming down of the God-Man into 'flesh.'* We are familiar with the declaration, that in the Incarnation "God became Man"; but there is no such statement in Scripture. In his Gospel, John says: 'The Word became *flesh*'—not man. In his Epistle to the Romans, Paul speaks of 'God sending His own Son in the likeness of *sinful flesh*'—not as man. And elsewhere he says that He took the form of a servant, 'being made in the likeness of men'—yes, in the likeness of men *as they are;* and as they are, men are not truly human but only '*sinful flesh.*' The term invariably used in the New Testament is not *man* but 'flesh,' and there is a vast difference of meaning in the two words. The distinction between them has not been recognized as it ought to have been, because, the flesh-and-blood nature of man has been mistakenly regarded as his true nature for the earthly life, and therefore the words *man* and 'flesh,' have been taken as synonymous. For instance, *Dr. Oosterzee* says in *The Image of Christ:*

"The beloved apostle John represents the denial of *the true humanity* of the Lord as the very spirit of antichrist."

It was not so. What John says, is this: 'Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come *in the flesh* is of God' (1 John iv. 2). And thus it is through all our religious literature: *man* and *flesh* are interchangeable terms. But they are never interchanged in the New Testament, and this very

fact ought long ago to have awakened suspicions and questionings regarding the current view of the Incarnation.

The passage of Scripture which deals most directly and definitely with the nature of Christ, both in His pre-Incarnate and Incarnate states, is Phil. ii. 6-8. It puts clearly before us what we may call *the ladder of the great Descent*, and every step of the ladder is in its right place according to historical order—'Who, being originally in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross.'

1. '*Who, being originally in the form of God*,'—ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων. That these words do not refer to the Incarnate Christ, but to the pre-Incarnate Lord, is freely acknowledged by our best commentators, such as *Lightfoot*, *Meyer* and many more. And as we have already seen, 'the form of God' cannot possibly mean "the attributes of God," as *Lightfoot* and others have supposed, for at least two reasons: *First*, if 'form' were equivalent to "attributes," then this must be granted—that as the Father and Holy Ghost have Divine attributes equally with the Son, they also must have 'form,' yet, the term is applied in Scripture *only to the Son;* and *second*, 'the form of God,' as Divine Man, frequently appeared in Old Testament times, and in every respect spake and acted humanly. Then the

term '*originally*' refers to that which had a *beginning*, and not to the essential *Deity* of the Son, which had no beginning. As we have already seen, *Bishop Lightfoot* grants that the Greek word *ὑπάρχων* "denotes *prior* existence, but not necessarily *eternal* existence." This is true, and therefore Paul chose it in preference to any other when referring to 'the *Firstborn* of all creation,' whose humanity was not eternal.

2. 'Counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God,' or, as we prefer to render it with the American revisers—'*Counted not equality with God a thing to be grasped*,'—*οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ*. Now these words have no meaning if they refer to the Son *as a Divine Being*, and for this simple and all-sufficient reason, that, being Divine, He was already and eternally *equal* with the Father. But if they are rightly regarded as applying to the God-Man they are exceedingly beautiful and easily understood, for in His perfect lowliness of heart He did not grasp equality with God. It was true of the Son, both in His pre-Incarnate and Incarnate states, that though He and the Father were one, yet He neither hastened to declare that oneness nor insisted on its recognition by those He taught, but patiently waited until—in the natural order of their intellectual growth and spiritual progress—they were prepared to apprehend and receive it. It was in the Upper Room and in the night in which He was betrayed that Jesus said, 'he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father' (John xiv. 9). Verily! He 'counted not equality with God, a thing to be grasped.'

3. '*But emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant,*' —ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, μορφὴν δούλου λαβών. This double declaration is of the very utmost consequence, and deserves and demands the most careful and prayerful attention. At this point we come to the very core of the great event we are now considering —the Incarnation of Christ. The word 'emptied' would have been better rendered by *stripped* or *divested*, which are the terms used by *Lightfoot*, *Lange*, and other able expositors.

Of what, then, did the Lord God divest Himself? Lightfoot replies:

"He divested Himself, not of His Divine nature, for this was impossible, but *of the glories and prerogatives of Deity*."

But why has the worthy Bishop *changed his ground* just at this point? Has he not told us that "form (μορφή) must apply to the *attributes* of the Godhead"? If that be true, then ought he not—in self-consistency—to have said, that when the Divine Son became Incarnate, "He divested Himself," not only of the "glories" and "prerogatives," but also of the *attributes* of Deity? This opinion is advanced by *Gess* in his *Christi Person und Work*—as *Dr. Edwards* has reminded us—

"The Logos divested Himself of all Divine attributes."

But had He really done so, He must thereby have ceased to be Divine; for all the attributes of a Person cannot be laid aside, and the Person Himself continue thinking and willing, speaking and acting as before? *Bishop Lightfoot*, we doubt not, would have refused to accept *Gess'* conclusion, and yet it is

the natural and logical outcome of his own idea that "form must apply to the *attributes* of the Godhead." That the glories, prerogatives, and attributes of Christ's Divinity were veiled and limited in Jesus of Nazareth is certain, for, as *Bishop Gore* most truly remarks:

> "All through the course of His earthly life, Jesus spoke under the limitations of a properly human consciousness."

But to say that He 'emptied' or *stripped* Himself of all these is simply not true. Limitation is one thing, laying aside is another. Had the Christ really been thus self-divested, nothing of His Divine nature would have remained, neither could He have said, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.'

Again, then, we ask, *Of what did He divest Himself?* Many commentators reply, 'He divested Himself of the *glory* which He had with the Father before the world was.' Now, rightly to understand this answer, it will be necessary to obtain a clear apprehension of what *glory* really is. What then is glory? Glory consists of two things—*a hidden substance, and a visible manifestation.* Look at the natural sun: it has hidden elements and qualities of matter which are its essential and internal glory, and it has the outshining splendour of the sunshine which is its external glory. The outward and visible glory is the effect and manifestation of that which is inward and unseen. Think next of the Lord in His pre-Incarnate state—the great Sun of Righteousness, of whom the natural sun is a symbol. He too possessed the twofold glory—the hidden and the visible. When

Moses offered the prayer, 'Show me, I pray Thee, Thy glory' (Exod. xxxiii. 18), what was it he wished to see? It was the outward and visible glory of the Lord. Now, what did the Lord say in reply? He said two things—'I will make all My *goodness* pass before thee,' and 'Thou canst not see My *face*, for man shall not see Me and live' (Exod. xxxiii. 19, 20). Consider each for a moment. *What is 'Goodness'?* It is the substance of glory—the hidden qualities of the moral character, which visibly outshone from the person of the Lord when He willed them to do so. Goodness in human beings also, is glory in the making; and therefore, in the great Hereafter, the hidden 'goodness' of every saint shall clothe his person with visible glory, for did not Jesus say, 'The righteous *shall shine forth as the sun* in the kingdom of their Father'? (Matt. xiii. 43). According to the goodness, so shall be the glory, for as one star differs from another in splendour, so shall it be with all the glorified. And thus shall be fulfilled that other saying of Christ: 'There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known.' The glory of every saved and sanctified soul shall manifest his character, and reveal the man exactly as he is. 'He shall know, even as also he is known.' The Lord also said to Moses, '*Thou canst not see My face.*' These words are very generally misapprehended. They are supposed to declare that the *face* of Him who spake unto Moses could not be seen. But do we not read in Exod. xxxiii. 11, that 'the Lord spake unto Moses *face to face*, as a man speaketh unto his friend'? It is not improbable that Moses

was looking into His face at the very moment when he presented his petition, for the whole conversation between him and the Lord appears to have been an immediate communion. Every Scripture should be read in the light of its context. When the prayer of Moses, 'Show me, I pray Thee, Thy glory,' is thus regarded, we can see that it was not the face of the Lord he desired to behold, but its glory. Well, the Lord graciously proclaimed His *goodness*—the *essential* glory—but the outward glory of His *face* in all its fulness of splendour could not be shown. Why? Because of the inability of Moses to bear the sight. Who can gaze at the natural sun, in the hour of its meridian splendour? When Paul, on his way to Damascus, saw in vision the glory of the ascended Saviour, *it smote him into blindness;* and when John, in his Patmos vision, was brought into the immediate presence of his glorified Lord, *he fell at his feet as dead.* It was in merciful lovingkindness that the Lord God—the Divine Man—proclaimed His *essential* glory to His faithful servant Moses, and at the same time *refused* to show him His *outward* glory except in a small degree (Exod. xxxiii. 20-23). Very many of His Old Testament appearances were without the glory, but on other and very special occasions the glory was manifested. Now, if the Incarnation of our Lord had only been the laying aside of the visible glory (the *invisible* glory of His *goodness* could not thus be dealt with), that would have been no new thing in the world, for it had often been laid aside before, *and we never read that when He divested Himself of that glory He laid aside for a season 'the*

form of God.' When thus we come to a clear recognition of what glory really is, we see that 'form' and 'glory' are in no respect equivalent. The sunshine is the glory of the sun, but no one ever thinks or speaks of sunshine as a 'form.'

Again, then, we inquire, *Of what did He divest Himself?* One or two recent expositors have taken 'form' as signifying "*status*," and believe that it was His "status" which the Lord laid aside. The very fact that so many different opinions are entertained regarding 'the form of God' by our foremost divines and commentators, is sufficient evidence that the meaning of 'form' is not clearly apprehended. Can 'form' and "status," then, be accepted as signifying the same thing? This is the most unsatisfactory explanation of all. 'Form' refers to *visible appearance*, and "status" to *social position.* The verse in the Old Testament which specially speaks of the 'form' of the Lord, proves this to demonstration. In rebuking Aaron and Miriam for their rebellion against Moses, the Lord Himself said unto them concerning His 'faithful' servant, '*the form of the Lord shall he behold*' (Num. xii. 8). It was, therefore, *an object that could be seen.* Now, put "status" in the place of 'form,' and it will be immediately evident how utterly inadmissible it is—'the "*status*" of the Lord shall he *behold.*'

Once more then, and finally: *Of what did He divest Himself?* We answer at once, *It was the 'form of God' which He laid aside.* He put off that form, that He might put on another. The form of which He divested Himself was 'the form of *God*,'

and the form which He received and appropriated was 'the form of a *servant*.' We are not told *how* He put off the former 'form' in order that He might put on the latter, and where Scripture is silent it is not wise for us to speak; but the *fact* of the laying aside of 'the form of God' is plainly stated. What then was the difference between 'the form of God' and 'the form of a servant,' which in Phil. ii. 6, 7, are brought into immediate contrast? *The former was the Divine Humanity*—the true and perfect humanity of the God-Man; *the latter was a flesh-and-blood humanity*, such as all living human beings possess at this hour—but without corruption. 'God sent forth His Son born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,' In other words, He who had created all things, and was above the law, in order that He might become the Redeemer of all things, was made 'under the law.' He, whose original Humanity was spiritual and Divine and received from the Father, now took a humanity which was natural and fleshly and received from His virgin-Mother, for He was 'born of a woman' and was the woman's seed. He, in whose likeness man was created, was now made 'in the likeness of men.' He came to be the 'servant' of God for humanity's sake, and the servant of men for God's sake. 'Behold my *servant*, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth' (Isa. xlii. 1). 'I am among you as one that serveth' (Luke xxii. 27). All this is clear and simple, compared with much that is taught concerning the In-

carnate Christ in these days of high philosophy and advanced culture. Take the following as a sample. In a sermon recently delivered by an able and popular London preacher, he is reported to have spoken thus:

"What did Jesus mean when He said that he who had seen Him had seen the Father?" The preacher "imagined that this was the meaning. There was always in the Eternal unknown Power something capable of sympathizing with nature, in fact a human side of God. By human we do not necessarily mean flesh and blood, for all that gives meaning and value to flesh and blood is something which is certainly neither, but of which this is, as it were, an accidental clothing. By human nature we mean essentially moral and affectional attributes—love, justice, mercy, truth, etc. This alone gives value to any incarnation, this alone is properly human nature. These moral and affectional attributes belong to what we may call the human side of God's nature, and that the only way of making this intelligible to man was by the revelation of so much of Him as was intelligible under the limitations of humanity. This was the incarnate human nature used in an exceptional manner for a special purpose. Jesus, conscious of this mission, used these direct and simple words, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.'"

This delightfully vague and hazy teaching about Christ is very popular in our time. It makes the Gospel so deliciously indefinite, and at the same time interesting to the imagination, like a distant cloud full of moonshine. It was well that the preacher said "he *imagined* this was the meaning of Christ's words," for it is all imagination together, and certainly not the teaching of Scripture.

4. '*Being made in the likeness of men*,'—ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος. These are marvellous words,

which we shall do well to consider very carefully. *Bishop Lightfoot* says, that,

> "Unlike μορφή, this word—'likeness'—does not imply the *reality* of our Lord's humanity.'

Take special note of that; it is a very important admission. Had the Son through Incarnation become Man—the Perfect Man—as is generally believed, this word would not have been used by the apostle. But seeing that the Incarnation was the descent of the Divine Man—the Perfect Man—into a flesh-and-blood condition 'for the suffering of death,' no better word could have been employed to describe the earthly nature of Christ than the one Paul used. Christ did not become Man, but was made in 'the likeness of men'; and men are 'sinful flesh.' In the minds of those who regard the Incarnation as the descent of Deity into Humanity, 'likeness' signifies that the Son of God became Man; and that is generally regarded as an unfathomable mystery. But when the Incarnation is rightly and scripturally apprehended, then the term used by the apostle is recognized to be, not only profoundly significant, but also in measure understandable. Because we are 'sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same' (Heb. ii. 14). 'It behoved Him, in all things, to be made like unto His brethren' (Heb. ii. 17). 'God sent His own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh,' or 'flesh of sin' (Rom. viii. 3). But why 'flesh of sin'? This very remarkable designation is not given to the 'flesh' merely because sin

has corrupted it and so made it 'sinful,' but also, and much more specially, because, *but for sin we should not have had flesh-and-blood bodies at all.* It is a common mistake to suppose that the natural flesh-and-blood body which man at first received, was the true and final physical constitution of humanity. On the contrary, it was only an initial and temporary state, out of which he was Divinely intended to grow into a spiritual and incorruptible condition, just as the bud or blossom on a fruit-tree is evolved by sunshine and rain into fruit. 'First the natural, and then the spiritual.' The flesh-and-blood nature which we now possess in our degraded and mortal state is the effect of the Fall, and therefore 'sinful' in itself. In the work of *Canon Holland, On Behalf of Belief* (page 262), he says:

"No one who pronounces his faith in these words ('The Word became flesh') can ever suppose for a moment that there is anything radically and inherently base in the flesh—in human nature. For evidently there is no hint of any alteration in the human character of the flesh, to make it unfit for God to inhabit. It is our flesh that He became, our nature that He assumed. . . . It was never so human as when God took it, and therefore never so fully itself as when it was made sinless."

Now, this is a great error. Had our first parents kept their first estate and risen through evolution out of the natural into the spiritual condition, their posterity would also have been from the beginning more or less spiritual in their nature, and increasingly so as the race was spiritually developed. But when they sinned, they not only retained their flesh-and-blood bodies, but also degraded them into an un-

natural condition through the corrupting power of moral evil. Therefore, the flesh now is "*radically* base," and is indeed and emphatically 'flesh of sin' —'*sinful* flesh.' Now notice, the Incarnate body of the Lord was not 'flesh of sin'; for had it been so, He Himself would have needed salvation; but the angel said unto Mary, 'That which is to be born shall be called *holy*.' The opinion held by Gottfried Menken of Bremen and Edward Irving of London and others since their day, that Christ's body of flesh and blood was sinful and mortal because "sinfulness and mortality belong of necessity to the essence of natural earthly humanity," is a doctrine wholly opposed to the teaching of the Scriptures. The body of Jesus was flesh and blood like unto that which the first man had before the Fall, and therefore, though made 'in the likeness of men,' was not the final or perfect form of humanity. It was capable of weakness and pain, suffering and death, all of which Jesus endured. The Incarnate life of Christ was a life '*in the flesh*,' and because it was so, and after its redemptive purpose had been fulfilled, He left it behind for ever, and passed through Resurrection and Ascension into the true spiritual humanity which He had before the foundation of the world. Therefore, says Paul, not with regret but rejoicing, 'Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him *so* no more' (2 Cor. v. 16).

5. '*And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself*,'—*Καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος, ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν.* There are two words here which

ought to receive special attention—'*fashion*' and '*humbled*.' The *first* word expresses the *transitoriness* of Christ's earthly life and fleshly nature. As *Bishop Lightfoot* truly says:

"It denotes the figure, shape, fashion of a thing, and altogether suggests the idea of something changeable, fleeting, unsubstantial."

'Form' is the term applied to Christ's *original* Humanity, and '*fashion*' to that which was *Incarnate*. And why was the latter thus described? Just because it was taken for a special purpose, and only 'for a little while.' Theologians generally regard the appearances of the Divine Man in Old Testament times as merely *apparitional*, and the earthly life of the Incarnate Christ as *truly human*, whereas almost the contrary is the truth. The pre-Incarnate appearances were real and truly human, while the earthly life—though not apparitional—was fleshly and transitory. The *second* word, 'humbled,' is also worthy of being thoughtfully pondered. It was a tremendous descent for the God-Man to come down into flesh and blood, but He descended still lower than that; 'being found in fashion as a man, *He humbled Himself*.' The whole of His earthly life was a charming manifestation of the humility of love—a downward path of self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice, which has ever commanded, and must increasingly and eternally command, the reverent admiration and adoring homage of every human being capable of recognizing and appreciating what true nobleness and genuine greatness are.

6. '*Became obedient unto death, yea, the death of the*

cross.' The Divine Man became Incarnate for many purposes, but chiefly for *one*, of which we shall speak immediately. But first of all we shall indicate in few words what some of the other purposes were. *And First—He came to reveal God more nearly and fully than He had ever done before, at least since the Fall.* He revealed the Divine *Fatherhood* when He said unto all men, 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life'; and when He said to the disciples, 'The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father.' And surely He revealed the Divine *Motherhood* also when He exclaimed, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'; and again, when with aching heart, He wept over the doomed city, and cried, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.' The sensitive ear of the loving heart can hear the same voice and the same tones in these tender and pitiful words, which in the ancient time exclaimed, 'Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me.' The Jehovah of the Old Testament, was the *Lord* God, and 'the man'; and the Jesus of the New Testament said, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.' In a sermon on *Essential Christianity* recently preached in Rochester Cathedral by *Canon Cheyne*, he said:

"If men really hunger after oneness with God, Christ will manifest Himself to them in the records of His life, and in seeing Him they will see God."

And he might have added, that not in any age of history, or in any country under heaven, or in any world in the universe, can God ever be seen or known in any other way than through Christ—not only or chiefly, however, "in the records of His life," but by immediate and personal fellowship with Himself as a living and loving Saviour and Lord. 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath *declared* Him.' He 'declared' Him by the words He spake, and by the works which He did (John xiv. 10), but most of all by His life and character. In Him we see and know the Father, and shall see Him and know Him with ever-increasing fulness for ever and ever. Many persons have known God from their childhood, because they have known Christ; but their knowledge of the Son being both very limited and superficial, they know the Father only in a small degree. Having failed to cultivate that moral earnestness which would have impelled them to be 'instant in prayer,' and persistent in the devout study of the Word, Jesus could say to them to-day, 'Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know Me?' O that every Christian would remember that he can know the Father only by knowing the Son, and that the Son can be known only through the prayerful study and habitual practice of the Gospel under the enlightening and guiding influences of the Holy Ghost! *If we wish to see God, let us look*

at Jesus, for did not Jesus say, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father'; and '*The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works*'? (John xiv. 9, 10). It was God in Christ who changed the water into wine at the wedding in Cana, and thereby revealed His glorious purpose to transmute natural affection into spiritual love, and sin-corrupted marriage into the Holy Sacrament of life and joy which in the beginning He intended it to be—a Sacrament which shall be pure and perfect, satisfying and eternal, for 'neither is the man without the woman nor the woman without the man in the Lord, It was God in Christ who uttered the beautiful and heart-comforting words, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not'; and who lovingly permitted them to clamber upon His knees and nestle in His bosom while 'He laid His hands upon them and blessed them.' It was God in Christ who called a little child unto Him and set him in the midst of the disciples when they had inquired, 'Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' and said, 'Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. xviii. 2, 3), and so taught them to understand that real greatness consists in faith and love, obedience and moral simplicity, and not in mental ability, or social place and power. It was God in Christ who forgave sin and healed all manner of diseases, thereby revealing the purpose of His redemptive grace to uplift His people out of Moral Evil and all its effects perfectly and for ever. It was God in Christ who wept at the grave of Lazarus,

and manifested by His tears His sorrowful sympathy, not only with Martha and Mary, but also with all bereaved hearts to the end of time. It was God in Christ who cried out, 'Lazarus, come forth,' and thus declared His determination to destroy death and spoil the grave of its prey. It was God in Christ who mourned over the impenitent inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thus exhibited His heart-broken anguish over all world-loving and Christ-rejecting sinners. 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.' *Second—He came that He might carry our sorrows.* 'Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows' (Isa. liii. 4). In relation to the Father Jesus was a man of joy, but in relation to sinful men He was 'the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.' A tender-hearted mother carries the sorrows of her children; a true-hearted pastor carries the sorrows of his people; a large-hearted patriot carries the sorrows of his country, but the tender, true, large, and loving heart of the Incarnate Saviour carried the sorrows and sufferings of the whole human race. What a load! Only a Divinely-Human Redeemer could have borne it. Through sympathy—such as no other being ever had—He gathered into His own bosom all the sufferings and sorrows of humanity; and because His pity was practical, and His sympathy active, 'He went about doing good'—feeding the hungry, healing the sick, comforting the bereaved, pardoning the guilty, enlightening the ignorant, and giving life eternal to all who were willing to receive it. His own words at the commencement of His ministry

were these: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He hath sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord': and that manifold and magnificent purpose was fully fulfilled, as the Gospels abundantly testify. *Third, He also came to bear our iniquities.* And this He did to the uttermost, not merely by pitying the wicked and pardoning the penitent, but also by taking to Himself the entire wrongdoing of humanity. 'The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all': 'for Him who knew no sin *He made to be sin on our behalf*, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him' (2 Cor. v. 21). It was the guilt of the race which He appropriated and carried to the cross, that there He might 'put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself' (Heb. ix. 26). And because He was '*Sin*,' He became a sin-offering—an offering for all—therefore, says John, 'He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world' (1 John ii. 2). We here stand face to face with the *supreme* purpose which He had in view when He became Incarnate. *That purpose was to Die: 'Becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross.'* These words declare, not only that He was perfectly obedient to the Father until He died, but also and chiefly that *Death was the purpose of His life*—a purpose which He did not fail to fulfil. His Crucifixion began with His Incarnation, and the Divinely appointed end of His Incarnation was the decease

He accomplished at Jerusalem. The Father sent Him to die; Jesus Himself said so: 'Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again: no one taketh it away from Me, but I lay it down of Myself; I have power (right) to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this commandment received I from My Father' (John x. 17, 18). There are those who believe and teach that though Jesus had never been crucified at all, His lofty teaching, beneficent life, and perfectly beautiful character would have saved and sanctified humanity. But this is absolutely contrary to the Scriptures. In the late *Dr. Dale*'s words:

"In an indirect way it might be said, that the teaching of Christ from first to last, all that He did, all that He endured, was intended to secure for us the remission of sins. But never, even incidentally—never even by implication—does our Lord affirm that it was for this that He wrought miracles, or revealed truth, or submitted to the sorrows and pains which preceded the cross. But *He does affirm, that it was for the remission of sins that He died.*"

Redemption was man's great necessity, and not education and development merely; and that redemption could be effected by none but Christ, and only through the laying down of His life, for in no other way could the result of sin be borne, and sin itself taken away. Let no mistake be made here, for just at this point we touch the very core of Christianity and the essence of the Gospel; 'Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that *through death* He might bring to nought,' etc. (Heb.

ii. 14); 'We behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, *because of the suffering of death*' (Heb. ii. 9). Crucifixion was the Divinely appointed end of His Incarnation, and death the purpose of His life. He was not sent to die *a natural death*, like other men, for two reasons at least: *First*—Because, although His body was natural, like that of Adam before the Fall, it was not corrupted, like Adam's body after the Fall, and therefore there was in it no principle or element of decay to take Him down into dissolution; and *Second*—being personally sinless, the law had no claim against Him. He did not deserve to die, and death Divinely inflicted upon Him as an individual would have been a huge injustice. And yet *God sent Him to die*—'This *commandment* received I from My Father.' Why was this commandment given? Was it not that humanity might be redeemed? The curse of violated law lay upon every individual of the race, and that law could not be righteously set aside *even by God*, because it was the embodiment and expression of His own perfect and therefore unchanging will. 'He cannot deny Himself' (2 Tim. ii. 13). The law in itself was 'holy, just, and good,' but having been voluntarily violated by man, he was no longer able to meet its requirements, and could only bear the penalty of disobedience. But what was not possible to man the sinner, was gloriously possible to man the Sinless—the holy Saviour. He was at once the Creator and the Lawgiver, and if He (as the Head of the race) freely chose, through a natural birth, to take a natural flesh-and-blood body,

that on behalf of the guilty He might by His life of obedience magnify the law, and then by His death bear its penalty, He could thus become the Redeemer. And this was just what He did: 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us' (Gal. iii. 13). 'Ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things . . . but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ' (1 Pet. i. 18, 19). The advocates of what is called the Moral theory of the Atonement do not disparage the blood, but they regard the shedding thereof as only a glorious exhibition of Divine love. This is a defective view of the great Sacrifice. It is true that the death of Christ was a sublime manifestation of Infinite love, but why was this *particular* manifestation of it *a necessity?* Why did it please the Father to '*bruise* the Son and put Him to grief'? The answer is Divinely supplied: '*He made His soul an offering for sin.*' Whatever theory men may either construct or adopt of the meaning and effects of Christ's death, it ought to be in harmony with the facts, which are these: 'He suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God.' No blessing could be bestowed on men which would meet their need in all its length and breadth but the blessing of deliverance from sin, and this glorious deliverance was brought to us by His death. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins' (1 John iv. 10). 'God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners,

Christ died for us' (Rom. v. 8). If every hearer of the Gospel could only be brought to apprehend, in measure, the greatness of the Sacrifice which Christ offered on Calvary, and the awful sufferings He there endured, surely the prophetic promise of the Saviour would soon be fulfilled: 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself.' Oh what sufferings He endured for sinners! His agony in Gethsemane was inconceivably great; it caused Him to perspire 'drops of blood'; but His sufferings on the cross were still greater, for *they literally broke His heart.* The very hell of sin is the realization of being utterly God-forsaken; and that final result of evil was experienced by Jesus when He uttered the cry, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' In the light of modern medical science, there is every reason to believe that the pressure of His grief actually rent His heart. In his admirable work, *A Treatise on the Physical Cause of the Death of Christ, Dr. William Stroud* seems to prove to demonstration, that the immediate cause of Christ's death was rupture of the heart. And his opinion has been adopted by a large number of the most eminent medical authorities. *Dr. J. Y. Simpson*, late Professor of Medicine in Edinburgh University, says:

"The details left regarding Christ's death are most strikingly peculiar in this respect, that they offer us the result of a very rude dissection, as it were, by the gash made in His side after death by the thrust of the Roman soldier's spear. The effect of that wounding or piercing of the side was an escape of blood and water, visible to the Apostle John standing some distance off; and I do not believe that anything could possibly account

for this appearance, described by that apostle, except a collection of blood effused into the distended sac of the pericardium in consequence of rupture of the heart."

In view of this awful fact, no true believer will hesitate to say with ourselves:

> O Jesus Christ! Thy heart did break
> On Calvary's cross for me;
> And now my heart, in grief and love,
> Must give itself to Thee.

The Death of Christ was not an arbitrary and despotic demand on the part of God, as some have supposed, and who, on the ground of their own misapprehension, have dared to call Christianity "a religion of blood." It is true that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, and that the work of Redemption demanded His death; therefore Jesus said, 'This commandment received I from My Father'; but it is also true that the coming and death of Christ were voluntary, and hence He also said, 'Lo, I am come to do Thy will, O God'; 'Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life.' It is true that Divine condemnation rests upon every sinner, for 'the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodlines and unrighteousness of men' (Rom. i. 18); but it is also true that 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life.' . . . 'He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life: but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him' (John iii. 16, 36). The Sacrifice of Christ on Cavalry had a double aspect:

it was offered to God and endured for man, and was therefore both a Propitiation and an Atonement. 'He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the whole world' (1 John ii. 2). Christ's death was a necessity for man's redemption, *for only by the shedding of Christ's blood and the sacrifice of His life could violated law be honoured and the curse of that violation lawfully removed.*

In *The New Theology* (p. 53), Mr. Campbell says:

"When theologians talk of the wrath of God against sin, and the wrong which sin has inflicted upon God, they employ figures of speech which are distinctly misleading. In fact, they do not seem to have a clear idea as to what sin really is. They use vague language about it as though it were some kind of corporate offence against God, of which the whole race has been guilty without being able to help it, and which no individual can escape, although he is as much to blame as if he could. But sin has never injured God, except through man. It is the God within who is injured by it, rather than the God without. It is time we had done with the unreal language about the Judge on the great white throne, whose justice must be satisfied before His mercy can operate."

In *None Like It* (p. 111), the late Dr. Parker replied to this awful and unscriptural doctrine, in a very earnest and effective manner:

"As the Cross is the one way to heaven, so conscious sin is the one way to the cross. To the intellect it is foolishness, and to pride a stumbling-block; but to broken-heartedness and self-helplessness it is the very power and love and glory of God."

In view of all that the Scriptures have declared concerning the *necessity* of Christ's death, we profoundly regret the easy way in which Christian men

sometimes speak of it as if it had merely been an unfortunate accident and calamity which need never have happened if circumstances had only been more propitious. For instance, the *Rev. Dr. Stalker*, in his excellent *Imago Christi* (p. 64), says:

"If the Jewish people instead of rejecting had welcomed Him, what would have happened? Would He have set up His throne in Jerusalem, and made the whole world subject to it? Was it only when they had made it impossible for Him to reign over them that He turned aside from what appeared to be His destiny, and limited Himself to a kingdom not of this world? It is impossible to read Christ's life intelligently without asking such questions as these. Yet it is vain to ask them, for they cannot be answered."

We regard these words as not only very mistaken, but also fitted to effect a large amount of mischief. Young inquirers and sceptical persons may very naturally draw from them the conclusion that an atoning Sacrifice was not needed for men, and that if the Jews had only received Jesus as their Messiah, He would at once have become their King, "set up His throne in Jerusalem, and made the whole world subject to it." But, instead of this "seeming to be His destiny," the predictions of psalmists and prophets (Ps. xvi., Isa. liii., and Dan. ix. 26), and His own declarations regarding Himself (John viii. 28, xii. 27) show that the cross on Calvary, and not a throne in Jerusalem, was the Divinely appointed end of His Incarnation and earthly ministry. Was it not at the beginning of that ministry, and not at its close, before He was known to either the people or their rulers, and not after they had rejected Him as their Messiah, that He said to Nicodemus, 'As

Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up'? (John iii. 14). There was a *must* in the matter—and why? Because, for the redemption of our race, His death was a necessity. The impression made by *Dr. Stalker's* words just quoted is not removed by what he afterwards says (p. 67):

"The life of Jesus appeared to miscarry. He who was meant to be a King was held unworthy to live even as a subject; instead of inhabiting a palace He was consigned to a prison; instead of being seated on a throne, He was nailed to a tree. But although this was a miscarriage, in so far as it was due to the wicked will of men, it was no miscarriage in the wisdom of God. Looked at from man's side, the death of Christ was the blackest spot on human history, a mistake and a crime without parallel; but looked at from God's side, it is the grandest scene in the history of the universe; for in it human sin was expiated, the depths of the Divine love disclosed, and the path of perfection opened for the children of men."

Had this beautiful passage not been preceded by the other, it might have passed without remark; but in the light of the other it is liable to very serious misconstruction. If Christ's death effected the sublime results which it mentions, was not death, then, the purpose of His birth—the purpose of God? And if so, how can it be truly said that Jesus "was meant to be a king"—that "it was His destiny not to be the private man He was, but to be the Head of an emancipated and glorious state"—that "His offer of Himself to be the Messiah of His country was a *bonâ fide* offer," and that when the Jews rejected Him, "then the tide of His life turned and rolled back upon itself?" Surely, if He came to die

as a Saviour, He did not come to reign as King; or if He were designed to be "the Head of an emancipated and glorious state," then His death at the hands of the Jewish people and the Roman Government was an untoward and deplorable event which ought not to have happened. It was just like God to utilize their awful crime for the unfolding of His merciful love; but if the crime had not been committed—what then? O sirs! let us be loyal to the Scriptures. We are at sea without either compass or helm, when we leave them behind us. Now, what do they tell us? 'The Father sent the Son *to be the Saviour of the world.*' 'I lay down My life for the sheep,' '*This commandment received I from My Father.*' 'Behoved it not the Christ *to suffer these things*, and to enter into His glory?' These, and a multitude of similar passages in the Word, are conclusive. Jesus died, that we might live for ever.

And now, briefly and finally, let us consider the question whether or not the flesh-and-blood humanity of our Lord was *perfect?* The same mistake which the Apostolic Fathers made in relation to the Jehovah of the Old Testament, has been repeated by theologians and commentators in relation to the Jesus of the New, the mistake of making Him *too great.* In proof of this, take the following words of *Bishop Gore* in *The Incarnation*, etc. (p. 167):

"In Jesus Christ *humanity was perfect.* . . . In Him humanity is not only free from taint, *but in the moral and spiritual region also at the goal of development.* In Him first, we see man *completely in the image of God realizing all that was in the Divine idea for man.*"

These words refer, not to the risen and glorified Saviour, but to Jesus of Nazareth in the days of His flesh; and we hesitate not to say that they are altogether out of harmony with the plain declarations of the Word. The New Testament says that He was made 'in the likeness of sinful flesh'; but where does it tell us that "*In Him first we see man completely in the image of God*"? It teaches us that 'He was made perfect through sufferings'; but where are we told that "in Him humanity was *perfect*," or that "in the moral and spiritual region also (He was) *at the goal of development*"? It is true that He was personally sinless, and therefore 'separate from sinners'; but it is also true that He was one with us *as we now are*—bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

THE TRUE GREATNESS OF HIS INCARNATION LAY IN THE DEPTH OF HIS HUMILIATION. Let this fact be specially recognized and constantly remembered. It was not the greatness of Christ in His Incarnate humanity, but the *littleness* and limitations into which He had voluntarily entered which impelled the apostle to exclaim, 'Great is the mystery of godliness, He who was manifested *in the flesh*' (1 Tim. iii. 16). While the Church has taught us that "God became Man" and that "as Man He was perfect," the New Testament tells us that He laid aside 'the form of God' to take 'the form of a servant'—that He became poor (or beggared Himself (2 Cor. viii. 9) for our sakes—that He was 'made in the likeness of flesh of sin, and also made perfect through sufferings' (Heb. ii. 10). There was no *defect* in Christ at any period of His life or in any

stage of His growth, for in Him was no sin and therefore no defect; and yet, both as man and Saviour, He was imperfect. Take His *physical nature* first. It was flesh and blood, which are not the *perfect* nature of man, and therefore He *left* them behind Him before He ascended into the glory. Through His 'sufferings' on the cross He shed His blood and gave up His natural life, and then through resurrection He attained to the *spiritual* bodily state which is the *perfect* nature of man, and that bodily state shall be His for ever. Physically, He was the perfect Man in the beginning of history, and is also the perfect Man in the heaven of heavens to-day; but in the days of His flesh He was physically imperfect, being only flesh and blood. Look next at *His moral character.* Instead of being "at the goal of development," what do we read? 'Though He was a Son yet he learned obedience by the things which He suffered, *and having been made perfect* He became unto all them that obeyed Him the Author of eternal salvation' (Heb. v. 8). Then finally, *as a Saviour* He was also '*made* perfect through sufferings.' In His message to Herod, Jesus said, 'Go and say unto that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, *and the third day I am perfected*' (Luke xiii. 32). In order that He might be the sinner's Saviour, He had to die the sinner's death, and thus He was 'made perfect through sufferings.' And also, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, 'By one offering He hath *perfected* for ever them that are sanctified' (Heb. x. 14).

We shall now briefly state the events which followed the death of Christ, in the language of the New Testament, and in their historical order; and at the same time indicate the changes through which His nature passed.

'Christ suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God: being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which also *He went and preached unto the spirits in prison*, which aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah.' . . . 'For unto this end was the Gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but *live according to God in the Spirit*' (1 Pet. iii. 18-25, and iv. 6). 'Neither was He *left* in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption' (Acts ii. 31). 'Now hath Christ been *raised from the dead*, the firstfruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead' (1 Cor. xv. 20, 21). He Himself stood in the midst of His disciples, and saith unto them, 'Peace be unto you.' But they were terrified, and supposed that they beheld a spirit. And He saith unto them, 'See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: *handle Me and see*, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye behold Me having.' *After His resurrection*, His physical nature had been spiritualized in measure, and was probably progressively spiritualized, while He continued with them; therefore He appeared and vanished from time to time, just as He was wont to do in Old Testament times. 'He led them

out until they were over against Bethany: and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it came to pass *while He blessed* them *He parted from them*, and was carried up into *heaven*' (Luke xxiv. 50, 51). 'He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things' (Eph. iv. 10). Yes, '*That He might fill all things*'—all hearts and homes, all churches and institutions, all tribes and nations, all the earth and heavens, with His own fulness, 'for it hath pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell' (Col. i. 19). There is a glorious *future* in store for our sin-cursed earth—a golden age of enlightenment and prosperity, peace and plenty, harmony and joy. In the beautiful and eloquent words of the author of *The Millennial Age* (p. 21):

"We long for the period, when all manhood shall be manly, and all womanhood womanly, and all childhood sweet, and all youth beautiful, and all mature age august, and all old age tinted with summer memories, and radiant and softly resplendent as the utmost shinings of the genial setting sun. We long for the period, when inspiration shall fill all hearts, and grow tuneful in all churches, and throb through all business, and communicate in all society, and rectify and harmonize all interests, and balance all institutions. We long for the period, dawning for our children and our children's children, when they shall be welcomed into the wide world's love, and purified in the wide world's purity, and cultured in the wide world's culture, and sheltered in the wide world's use and charity, and perfected in the wide world's ministrations, and led through rounded cycles of regeneration here to the dawning and to the sun, when at eventide there shall be light, and when—over the fulfilled ministries of time—the angel of eternity shall stand to lead them to their loftier and more resplendent uses, in that great cycle that hath no end, because it winds upwards to infinity and outward through eternity."

Glorious prospect! May the Lord hasten its coming! In the days of His flesh Jesus for a little while 'was *lower* than the angels' (Heb. ii. 9), but God 'raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come' (Eph. i. 20, 21). 'God also hath highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father' (Phil. ii. 9-11). Before His death Jesus prayed in the Upper Room, 'And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was' (John xvii. 5). And in due time the prayer was answered, for in the heaven of heavens He is once more 'The Word of God,' as in the beginning (Rev. xix. 13), and His perfect humanity is clothed with glory (Acts ix. 3, and Rev. i. 12-18).

From beginning to end the whole of the work of the Divine Son on behalf of the Eternal Father has been and is MEDIATORIAL.

Creation was a Mediatorial work. It embodied and manifested a purpose which was unspeakably grand and glorious—a purpose worthy of Him who brought it into existence. It was designed to be a home, a school, a sphere of activity, and a magnificent temple for the children of the Eternal Father, in which they

should enjoy His love, learn His will, fulfil that will in obedience and service, and give expression to all their faith and affection, gratitude and joy, in adoring worship; and, as the result of all these, to form and develop a moral character like unto that of God Himself, so that as His sons and daughters they might resemble their Father. The attainment of such a character was the Divinely intended end to be served by the material universe; and a greater or sublimer end it is impossible to conceive. The material universe was meant to serve the moral. But so far as the earth is concerned, and the human race which received it as an inheritance, the purpose of the Creator was not realized. On the contrary, it was effectively thwarted and made impossible of fulfilment. Sin corrupted both humanity and Nature, and brought them into subjection to the terrible influences of discord and disorganization, decay and death. But the Lord God is stronger than evil, and did not permit Himself to be baffled by its power. When, therefore, His creative work had been spoiled by sin, how perfectly natural and Divinely beautiful it was that He should become the Redeemer of the fallen race and the Renewer and Restorer of that natural world whose order and loveliness had been broken and blighted by the fall of him who was made to have 'dominion' over it. In *The Atonement*, p. 402, *Dr. Dale* says that "Christ had a *right* to speak, act and suffer as the Representative of the human race." Yes, truly, but on what was that "right" grounded? It was grounded not on the fact that He made man, but on this: that as the Divine Man He was Himself

the Head of the race, and as the great Mediator was responsible, in measure, for the fulfilment by man of the purpose for which he was created. What conceivable work then was more imperative or worthier of His accomplishment than the redemption and restoration of all that had been marred and ruined by the wilful wrong-doing of the free moral beings He had brought into existence? This glorious work of Redemption had been Divinely foreseen from eternity; and in the fulness of time it was accomplished.

And Redemption, too, was a Mediatorial work. While Jesus suffered and died for men, He also gave up the life of His flesh-and-blood humanity for the glory of His Father: 'I have glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do' (John xvii. 4). The Son is the great Author and Perfecter of all things; He never fails to finish whatever work He begins to do. 'The heavens and the earth were *finished,* and all the host of them' (Gen. ii. 1). He exclaimed on the cross, '*It is finished*'! And, blessed be God! the work of Redemption can never be spoiled, as was that of Creation. 'He obtained *eternal* redemption,' and became 'the Author of *eternal* salvation' (Heb. v. 9, and ix. 12). And now, the work of *the personal salvation of sinners*—by Divine power through human agency—is being carried on. *It too is a Mediatorial work* which one day shall be *finished,* and 'Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all His enemies

under His feet' (1 Cor. xv. 24, 25). It was of this that our late Poet Laureate so grandly sang:

> "That God, which ever lives and loves,
> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off Divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

Before His departure from earth Jesus said to His disciples, 'It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you.' . . . 'He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you' (John xvi. 7, 14). And on the day of Pentecost Peter said unto the multitudes gathered together in Jerusalem, 'This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath poured forth this which ye see and hear' (Acts ii. 22, 23). As the Son came to reveal the Father, so the Spirit has come to reveal the Son: 'He shall glorify Me.' He reveals Christ and effects all spiritual results, through the instrumentality of Gospel truth: 'He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you.' 'When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of Me' (John xv. 26).

Let Christians everywhere be filled with the Spirit. 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?' (Luke xi. 13). If we wish truly and increasingly to

know the Son, that in Him we may know the Father, whom to know is life eternal (John xvii. 3), let us give abundant opportunity to 'the Spirit of truth' to make us wise unto salvation through the constant and devout study of the sacred Scriptures. It is just here where many Christians fail. They read the daily newspapers and the books of men more frequently and with greater avidity than the Word of God, and thus prevent 'the Spirit of the truth' from making them men and women of the Spirit as they ought to be. Oh for a resurrection of the Bible in the homes and churches of believers! 'Sanctify them in the truth: Thy word is truth' (John xvii. 17). The question has often been asked, Are Christians Divinely expected to live without sinning? Certainly they are: 'These things write I unto you, *that ye sin not*' (1 John ii. 1). It is a sin to sin; and to be guilty of intelligent and wilful wrong-doing can never be a necessity. At the same time being sinful, it is easy for us to sin, and therefore we rejoice that 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father' (1 John ii. 1). And because we may also constantly be falling short of the glory of God and sinning ignorantly, let no one boast of sinlessness or regard the petition as unnecessary 'Forgive us our sins' (Luke xi. 4).

To our natural brethren still in the flesh we would say: Pass over from the old race, which is corrupt and perishing, to the new race of the twice-born, of which the glorified Saviour is the Head. 'Put off the old man' and 'put on the new' (Eph. iv. 22-24), by becoming 'new creatures' or 'new

creations' through faith in Christ (2 Cor. v. 17). Believe His Gospel, receive Himself as your own personal Saviour, and become partakers of the Holy Ghost; 'for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His' (Rom. viii. 9). And when you become the children of faith, let your faith be developed into love, and your love maifested in obedience and service, that, growing in grace and in knowledge, you may have the concurrent testimony of God's Spirit with your own spirit that you are His. Let your prayer be this:

"Cleanse and clarify our souls and refill them with Thyself, that we may live in the open secret, seeing thee in Thy loveliness, enjoying Thy lovingness, and knowing that in Thee we share Thine Eternal Life."

And thus receiving and reciprocating the love of the Father, you will know the Father Himself, for love and love only, can apprehend, appropriate and appreciate Love. Let no one fail to recognize and remember this great fact, that not by intellectual knowledge merely, but by love chiefly, if not wholly, can God be truly known, received, and enjoyed, for '*He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love*' (1 John iv. 8).

"Great God! 'tis love that Thou dost give,
And Thou art Love without degree;
In love alone we truly live,
And all who love abide in Thee."

Not only so, but all who thus live in God get God as their eternal Portion, and with Himself all that is His; for 'If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ' (Rom. viii. 17).

Before closing this chapter we shall put together, for purposes of comparison and contrast, the current Christology of the Catholic Church, and that which we have endeavoured to state with all brevity, simplicity and fulness in the preceding pages. Consider them well, and apart from prejudice.

The Old.	*The New.*
1. That the Son of God, as the Father's Agent, created all things *as God.*	1. That the Lord God, as the Father's Agent, created all things *as the God-Man.*
2. That all His O.T. Theophanies *were apparitional.*	2. That all His O.T. Appearances *were real.*
3. That the Incarnation was *the descent of Deity into Humanity.*	3. That the Incarnation was *the descent of the God-Man into 'flesh and blood.'*
4. That the Humanity of the Incarnate One *was perfect.*	4. That the flesh-and-blood humanity of the Incarnate One was *'made perfect through sufferings.'*

The difference between the two Christologies is immense; and if the New is as true and Scriptural as we believe it to be, then—in process of time—it must necessarily effect *results* of a very far reaching and important character.

CHAPTER V

PRACTICAL RESULTS

It is just as true of Christian doctrines as of professing Christians, that '*by their fruits ye shall know them.*' When the old and new Christologies are thus tested and judged, there is much to be said in favour of the latter. That this may be clearly seen, let us briefly indicate what the fruits of the one have been and what those of the other are likely to be.

Take the old Christology first. It was originated by some of the apostolic Fathers, and is still believed and taught by modern orthodoxy. Now, what does it tell us? First of all, it tells us this: *That the Infinite and Invisible God was revealed to men prior to the Incarnation, not by a personal and visible Manifestation of the Son, but only through the medium of Creation and Revelation.* This extraordinary idea has developed abundant fruit in both the Church and the world, and it has not proved itself to be either nourishing or strengthening to the mental health or moral stamina of humanity. Indeed, it is an awful doctrine, when fairly faced and rightly apprehended. As we have previously shown, a great house, even

with a good library, is not a Home. It needs the visible presence of a loving father and mother to make it worthy of the name, and also to make the dwellers in it contented and happy. A little girl was one day weeping bitterly on one of the streets of London. A kind-hearted policeman went to her, and said, "What ails you, my little maid?" "I want to go home," she sobbingly replied. "And where is your home, my darling?" "Where mother is," was the touching and beautiful answer. Now, what would all the children of the Eternal Father-Mother have been, even in an unfallen condition, had not the Invisible God been visibly manifested to them by the Great Revealer—the God-Man? Surely, they would have realized the desolation of orphanhood, and been impelled to exclaim, even in Eden itself, "We want to go home." Angelic visitations from time to time might have been both interesting and welcome, but they could never have met and satisfied the natural and Divinely-implanted hunger of the heart for the immediate presence and fellowship of the Visible God. By the non-recognition of the great and glorious fact of the Divine Humanity from before creation, the Father has been put far away from His offspring and remained to them, in large measure, the Great Unknown. And this He must have continued to be for ever, but for the Fall of man. According to the old Christology, there was no Visible God in the universe until the Son became Incarnate. If this be true, then who would hesitate to exclaim, Thank God for the Fall, and the introduction of sin into the world! for thereby the Father,

through the Son, has been brought forth from His eternal hiddenness, and answered the universal and instinctive cry of the human heart, 'Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us'? But it is not true, for the Divine Man revealed the Divine Father from the beginning of time: 'The Image of the Invisible.'

And again, the old Christology teaches this, *That all the Theophanies of the Old Testament times were merely apparitional.* Now, human beings have never felt at home with ghosts, or ghostly appearances of any kind, which never fail to create fear and trembling. Look at the disciples in the upper room when Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst after His resurrection, 'They were affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit' (Luke xxiv. 37). If the Old Testament appearances had been apparitional, would not those who beheld them have been equally terrified? and yet, we never read that they were so. It is true that 'Moses hid his face in the desert, because he was afraid to look upon (the Visible) God'; but his fear arose from the facts that he had never seen the Lord before, and that He appeared to him *in glory*. The Lord God invariably came as 'a man,' and almost always in the most natural and human-like fashion. But the apparitional idea still holds its ground in modern theology, and in the minds of Christians generally; and therefore the so-called Theophanies have never greatly interested them nor proved an attractive study, even when they have believed in their reality. And thus again, by the rejection of the original Divine Humanity, God has been put far away from men, and all His

mediatorial dealings with them made repellantly mysterious.

Once more, *The old Christology has put even the Incarnate Saviour far away from sinners, by making Him altogether different from other men.* It makes Him not only the sinless One, but also the Divine and Perfect Man, and therefore a Being to whom it was both natural and easy to speak and act as He did. It has failed to apprehend the sublime fact that He did not become Man, but 'flesh'; that as such He was one with us as we now are; that He was not perfect either as a man or a Saviour, but had to be 'made perfect through sufferings'; and that in passing through that process He did not find it easy to do the Divine will, or endure the sorrows and sufferings which fell upon Him. His cries and tears in Gethsemane are sufficient evidence of that. The 'cup' from which He there prayed to be delivered was not the cross, but the awful *mental anguish* which in the garden itself, and in the hour and power of darkness, threatened to kill Him. 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, *even unto death.*' 'Father, if it be possible, let *this* cup pass away from Me!' 'There appeared unto Him an angel from heaven strengthening Him!' 'Who in the days of His flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto Him who was able to save Him from death, *and having been heard* for His godly fear,' etc. (Heb. v. 7). His prayer was answered, which it certainly would not have been had He cried for deliverance from the cross. He entered into oneness with us in all our sorrows, that we might

enter into oneness with Him in all His joys. But His oneness with us as we now are, not being rightly apprehended by the old Christology, its teachings have been both baneful and blighting in their influence upon men. In his sermon on Christ's prayer in Gethsemane Robertson of Brighton said, "Christ's prayer did not succeed. He prayed that the cup might pass from Him. It did not pass. . . . Christ's petition was not granted, yet He was the one well-beloved of His Father." Extraordinary utterances! in view of Christ's own words to the Father, 'I knew that Thou hearest Me always' (John xi. 42).

Let us now think of *the New Christology*, which we have stated in the preceding pages, and briefly consider what are likely to be its results when it comes to be generally and clearly apprehended, and has taken the place of the old. All its conceivable and possible results need not here be specified, but only a few of the chief.

1. *When the true Christology is understood and accepted, it will clear away the dense mist of perplexing mystery which lies upon the Old Testament Scriptures when they speak of the visible appearances of the Lord God.* Those appearances will no longer be regarded either as legendary myths, or apparitional visitations, or subjective visions on the part of those who saw them; but be recognized as the real and natural, the beautiful and beneficent comings of Him who was the great Mediator between God and men, and therefore the Revealer of the Father. In a paper

recently issued in *The North American Review, Professor Goldwin Smith* inquires:

"Why should we force ourselves to believe that the Being who fills Eternity and Infinity became the guest of a Hebrew sheikh?"

This is a reference to the sublime narrative contained in Genesis xviii. Now, but for the false teaching which men have received, it is very improbable that that foolish question would ever have been asked, either by a learned professor or anybody else. If the questioner had only known his Bible better than he seems to do, and been instructed in the true Christology, he would have understood that the Scriptures never suggest that "the Being who fills Eternity and Infinity became the guest (either) of a Hebrew sheikh" or of any other person. He is the God 'whom no man hath seen, *nor can see*.' But the Image of the Invisible God *as the Divine Man* appeared unto many in the olden time, and 'spake to them face to face as a man with his friend.' It was He who became the guest of the patriarch at Mamre; and in view of the purpose which He came to accomplish on that occasion, His partaking of the meal which Sarah prepared, and the long interview He held with Abraham His friend—'the friend of God' (Jas. ii. 23)—were charmingly beautiful and altogether worthy of His nature and character both as God and Man. It is still true that 'the foolishness of God is wiser than men,' and that philosophers generally are frequently the last to see clearly the teachings of Divine Revelation (Matt. ii. 25, 26; and Col. ii. 8). It is as true now as in the days of Paul, 'the

world through its wisdom knew not God' (1 Cor. i. 21).

A London preacher a little while ago, in speaking of the wrestling of the Divine 'man' with Jacob at Peniel, is reported to have said, "*We are not called upon to take this incident literally.*" Why not? Apart from the halo of mystery by which it is surrounded, it reads like a story of intensest literality; and surely the 'halting' of the patriarch all the remainder of his life was a very definite reality to him. There need be no hesitation in believing that the wrestling was spiritual—more spiritual than physical, especially towards its close—but with the narrative before us, it seems to be both irreverent and presumptuous to deny that it was also physical. If we begin to amend Scripture according to our small notions of propriety, we shall soon make a new Bible for ourselves, and it will certainly not be inspired. In his sermon on *Jacob's Wrestling* the late *Rev. F. W. Robertson* of Brighton said:

"What wonder if, to the unscientific mind of Jacob this conflict, so real, and attended in his person with such tangible results, seemed all human and material—a conflict with a tangible antagonist? What wonder if tradition preserved it in such a form? Supposing we admit that the Being, whose awful presence Jacob felt, *had no form* which could be grappled by a human hand, is it less real for that?"

To which we reply: Unless we reject the plain declarations of both the Old and New Testaments, we dare not admit any such thing. The pre-Incarnate Lord had a Form (Num. xii. 8; Phil. ii. 6)—a Form which could be seen—a Form which was

human—a Form which ate and drank, walked and talked, and had its feet washed (Gen. xviii.), and therefore a form which could be "grappled by the human hand." The "unscientific" mind of Jacob knew the tangible reality of the conflict, which the scientific and philosophic preacher chose to disbelieve. If all the wonderful events of the Old Testament are thus to be dealt with, the marvels of the New Testament will soon be treated in the same way. Indeed, many daring persons have already commenced that awful operation, and the blame, we think, may largely be laid at the doors of our theologians and preachers who teach that the Old Testament appearances of the God-Man were either apparitional, or the subjective visions which men and women realized in seasons of unusual mental or spiritual excitement. On what reasonable grounds can we object to men regarding all the post-resurrection appearances of Christ as apparitional or visional, if we ourselves thus regard His Old Testament appearances which are recorded as having been equally real? Yea, more, they were not only equally real, but also as truly human, for He manifested Himself in them all *in a similar way*. By a right understanding of the real Christology of Scripture, a large amount of unmeaning mystery is utterly dispelled, like cold and frosty fogs before the beams of the rising sun. Only let the sublime fact be recognized that the Creator and Mediator was God-Man, and then all the appearances recorded in the Old Testament will be easily accepted, not only as real, but also as beautiful. Being supernatural facts of history, they may still

continue to be mysterious in measure, but not more so than many other events connected with the Risen and Glorified Son of man which every evangelical Christian unhesitatingly believes. It is surely most reasonable to expect that the supernatural Christ would do supernatural deeds, and both by word and act effect results which to us must be miraculous!

2. *When the true Christology is understood and accepted, all the passages in both the Old and New Testaments which refer to the nature of Jehovah-Jesus will be seen to be in perfect and beautiful harmony.* Select all the Christological Scriptures from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, put them together and then read them, as a chapter might be read, in the light of our new Christology; and not only will they be found intensely interesting and profoundly instructive, but also beautifully harmonious. Indeed, the harmony becomes a charming unity—a unity which loudly testifies not only to the reality of the occurrences reported, but also to the guidance of the Divine Spirit by whose enlightening and inspiring power so many different men, in so many different ages, were enabled to write as they did about things so uncommon and strange. This marvellous unity of Scripture teaching is one of the strongest possible proofs that the Bible was Divinely inspired. When we read together such Scriptures as Genesis xviii. and Luke xxiv., we instinctively feel that we are in the presence of the same august Person; and out of the very depths of admiring and adoring hearts feel impelled to exclaim, 'Let me see Thy countenance, let me hear Thy voice;

for sweet is Thy voice, and Thy countenance is comely.'

3. *When the true Christology is understood and accepted, it will utterly uproot Arianism, Unitarianism, and every form of doctrine which denies the essential Deity of the Christ.* Had it not been for the mistaken interpretations of the Christological Scriptures made by the apostolic Fathers, and the strongly dogmatic way in which their different opinions were frequently proclaimed, it is more than likely that these isms would never have had an existence. And, we doubt not, that when the true Christology comes to be generally apprehended by Christian people, these and all similar isms will perish. It is very wonderful that they could ever have been believed by intelligent men, who had learnt from their New Testaments the claims which Christ had made, and His numerous extraordinary declarations regarding His own Person and work.

His claims are direct and definite: 'Before Abraham was, I am'—'I am the light of the world'—'I am the way, the truth and the life; no one cometh unto the Father but by Me'—'He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father'—'I am the resurrection and the life'—'I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty.' Are these the claims of a man, or of any created being, however great? Think also of the following *declarations*, and what they imply: 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, *and He would have given thee living*

water'—'If any man thirst, *let him come unto Me and drink*'—'The water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water *springing up unto eternal life*'—'He that loveth father or mother *more than Me* is not worthy of Me'—'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *how often would I have gathered thy children together* even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not'—'Marvel not at this; for *the hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice* (the voice of the Son of man) and shall come forth.' Again, we ask, Are these the words of a man, or of any created being, however great? Then take the personal testimonies of those who knew Him. The angel Gabriel said unto Mary concerning the coming Saviour, 'He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High.' A demon exclaimed, 'I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God!' John the Baptist cried, 'Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.'—'This is the Son of God.' Peter said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Thomas exclaimed, 'My Lord, and my God.' John the beloved wrote thus concerning Him, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.' . . . 'And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.' . . . 'We are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ: This is the true God, and life eternal.' And the Father Himself said: 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: Hear ye Him.' . . . 'Let all the angels of God worship Him.' These are extraordinary testimonies, and assuredly they were not

spoken merely of a man or of any created being, however great.

What do Unitarians, or any other persons, know about God, beyond what Jesus has made known to them? 'The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ.' And because He knew whence He came and whither He was going—even from God to God (John xiii. 3)—He demanded that all men should 'honour the Son, *even as* they honour the Father' (John v. 23). Now, Unitarians fail to do this. They worship the Father as the only living and true God, and give to Jesus Christ only the honour of admiration and imitation as a man, or the greatest of created beings, or a demigod who stands related to the Father they know not how. The ideas of Unitarianism are Christ-degrading and God-dishonouring conceptions; for 'He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who has sent Him.' God is not rightly honoured by men, unless they give to Him love and obedience, service and adoring worship; and how can such honour be properly rendered to the Son, if He also were not Divine like the Father? One of the sublimest scenes in all history is thus recorded in the Gospels: 'The high priest said unto Jesus, *I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God?* and Jesus said, *I am'!* (Matt. xxvi. 63, and Mark xiv. 61). In the presence of this testimony it is wonderful that any human being can regard Christ as less than Divine. Fortunately, Unitarianism is such a coldly intellectual system of belief, that all through the Christian

ages it has been cordially embraced and taught only by a comparatively few individuals. It brings winter into the heart. But of this we are sure, that when the clear and warm sunshine of the true Christology is received by the Catholic Church all its dead and unproductive frost-crystals will quickly melt away for ever. Some of the leading men in *The British and Foreign Unitarian Association* recently acknowledged that its churches were not increasing in number; but they comforted one another with the assurance that their "liberal theology" is steadily permeating all the churches. Alas for the churches if it be so! for Unitarianism is a great evil. It is not improbable, however, that the assurance they cherish may be well grounded; for the generally accepted Christology of the churches is such a confused, unphilosophical, and unsatisfactory conception of the Christ, that many minds may find a positive relief in receiving the apparently simple tenets of Unitarianism. And not only so, but the unscriptural speculations and opinions of many German writers concerning the nature of Christ are constantly being translated into English, and we doubt not that under their influence many persons are led first of all to question the correctness of central evangelical beliefs, and then by and bye impelled to embrace Unitarian doctrines. They often set Scripture aside altogether by their utterly unnatural and forced interpretations, and present a Christ to their readers who is no Christ at all and no real Saviour. They both misapprehend and misrepresent His nature, and thereby weaken and pervert Christianity at its very core.

Jesus said: 'Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he who is from God, he hath seen the Father' (John vi. 46). Again, 'Neither doth any know the Father, save the Son' (Matt. xi. 29). And again, 'I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me' (John vii. 29). The Son knew the Father perfectly. Now, if He only has seen and known the Father, what does that imply? It most certainly implies that His nature is Divine. Only God can see God, and no one but the Divine Son can know the Divine Father. No created being, however great, could truthfully declare that he had seen the Infinite and the Invisible, and known the Eternal and the Divine; but Jesus declared on many occasions that He had both seen and known the Father. This great declaration is of profoundest significance. What does it signify? It assuredly signifies this: that it requires a Divine Being to see and know a Being who is Divine, and because the Son only has directly seen and immediately known the Father, therefore He, and He only, could reveal Him. 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him' (John i. 18). Ay! and the declaration of the Father by the Son has been given from the beginning of human history.

The great truth of the Deity of Jesus shines in the Scriptures like the sun in its noonday splendour in a summer sky. 'The Lord God is a sun'—*the* Sun; and 'to you that fear My name, saith the Lord of hosts, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings' (Mal. iv. 2). The natural sun

is the symbol of the Divine Son, as we have shown in our work on *Nature as a Book of Symbols*.

In the Old Testament Scriptures, the Lord God spoke very definitely of Himself to Abram, and said: '*I am God Almighty*' (Gen. xvii. 1); and to Jacob: '*I am God Almighty*' (Gen. xxxv. 11); and to Moses: '*I Am that I Am*' (Exod. iii. 14); and again: '*I am Jehovah:* and I *appeared* unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, *as God Almighty;* but by My name *Jehovah* I was not known to them' (Exod. vi. 3). Yes, the Person who made these glorious declarations concerning Himself '*appeared*' to those to whom He addressed them; He was the Visible God. They knew Him intimately. This makes it certain that He was not the Invisible God 'whom no man hath seen nor can see,' but 'the First-born of all creation,' the Divine Man. Let this great fact be clearly apprehended, fully believed, and kept in everlasting remembrance. (See note D at the end of the book.)

In the New Testament Scriptures we also find the same Person speaking of Himself, and His words are wonderful. The Jews said unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS BORN I AM.' What an amazing utterance was this! It not only declares His pre-existence, but also the fact of His oneness with God. The 'I Am' was the Lord God—the Jehovah. And because they not only understood the meaning of His words, but also rejected them, it is

added: 'They took up therefore stones to cast at him' (John viii. 56-59). This great and plain declaration unites the testimony of Jesus in the days of His flesh, to that of the Jehovah in the time of Moses. It is the central link in the golden chain, which stretches from the beginning of time into the great eternity—the link of the personal testimony of the 'I Am' to His own essential Deity—*the Christology of Christ.* And now let us add the remaining links of that wonderful chain of Names, by which 'the Image of the Invisible God' has called Himself. When John in Patmos was favoured in vision with immediate communion with his risen Lord, what was the testimony of the glorified One? 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the *Lord God*, who is, and who was, and who is to come—*the Almighty*.' What He had said of Himself to Abraham and Jacob, He repeated to John; because He was 'the Alpha and the Omega'—'the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever'—'*the Lord God—the Almighty*.' To be able to believe that a mere man—the son of Joseph and Mary—could ever be so highly exalted as to become 'the Lord God' and 'the Almighty,' is to exercise a faith which is truly portentous—a faith far greater than that which is required to believe in the Deity of Jesus. 'And when I saw Him I [John] fell at His feet as one dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, Fear not: I am the first, and the last, and the Living one; I was dead, but behold, I am alive for ever more; and I have the keys of death and of Hades' (Rev. i. 8, 17, 18). This personal testimony of Jehovah-Jesus to His own essential Deity ought to

convince and satisfy the minds and hearts of all intelligent men and women who have any regard for the Bible as the Word of God.

A few more quotations from the New Testament may, however, be cited for the benefit of doubters:

'The eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. Hundreds of His followers joined them there, and by most of them He was worshipped; but some doubted' (Matt. xxviii. 16, 17). 'Behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him' (Matt. xvii. 5). 'John bare witness, saying, I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending and abiding upon Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God' (John i. 32-34). 'The woman saith unto Him [Jesus], I know that Messiah cometh (which is called Christ): when He is come, He will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He' (John iv. 25, 26). 'Jesus said unto them, Ye are from beneath, I am from above; ye are of this world, I am not of this world: I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for except ye believe that *I Am*, ye shall die in your sins' (John viii. 23, 24). 'Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and finding him, He said, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, And who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him? Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him, and He it is that speaketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him' (John ix. 35-38). 'I and the Father are one. The Jews took up stones again to stone Him' (John x. 30, 31). 'Jesus said unto her [Martha], I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord: I have believed that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even He that cometh into the world' (John xi. 25-27). 'The high priest said unto Him:

"Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And Jesus said, I am. Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hand, and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God' (John xiii. 3). 'And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was' (John xvii. 5). 'Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed: blessed are they that hath not seen, and yet have believed' (John xx. 27-29). 'Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name' (John xx. 30, 31). 'Who was declared the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead—even Jesus Christ our Lord' (Rom. i. 4). 'I have been crucified, yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself up for me' (Gal. ii. 20). 'That they may know the mystery of God, even Christ; in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden' (Col. ii. 3). *Of the Son* the Father saith: '*Thy throne, O God is for ever and ever*, and the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows' (Heb. i. 8, 9). 'Having then a great high priest who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God; let us hold fast our confession' (Heb. iv. 14). 'Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him and he in God' (1 John iv. 15). 'These things saith the Son of God, who hath eyes like a flame of fire and his feet are like unto burnished brass' (Rev. ii. 18). 'He is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood; and his name is called The Word of God'—'Ο Λόγος του Θεοῦ (Rev. xix. 13).

The Old Theology.

In *The Alternatives of Faith and Unbelief* (pp. 37-39), Dr. Stanford says:

"According to His own account of Himself, expressed or implied, He [Jesus] is never weak, never rash, never wrong, never has to make an apology. While He urges all men to repent, He never repents; while He teaches all men to pray for daily forgiveness, He never asks to be forgiven; serene in a storm of crime, in the face of all His critics, He flings forth the fearless challenge, 'Which of you convicteth Me of sin?' Of course, He makes for Himself the most unbounded claims on our loving, loyal trust. As a Teacher His one thesis is *Himself.* As a Saviour He never releases attention from Himself. As a giver of the 'one thing needful,' He offers to mankind no gift but the gift of Himself. He tells of eternal life as consisting in the knowledge of Himself. Speaking to the lost, the best of men had always said: 'Go to God'; Jesus always said: 'Come to Me.' Always the sage had said: 'Accept my system'; the Saviour said: 'Accept Me.' In every variety of persuasive, imploring accent, He said to all souls: 'Come to Me; leave all the world and come to Me; cling to Me, cling closer, and yet closer, for without Me ye can do nothing.' He claims to stand alone in His glory as the Saviour and Lord of souls. By His own proclamations He is not merely one of the foundations on which man may build his eternal hope—but the only one. He is not merely one of the means by which the soul may live—but the only one. He is not merely one of the soul's good shepherds—but the only one. He is not one way out of many to the Father—but the only one. He is not a planet, or one of the stars—but the Sun; and around Him all the constellations revolve. With entire simplicity, yet with unwavering tones of strength, He says: 'I am the Bread of Life'; 'I am the Way'; 'I am not *a* vine—but '*the* Vine'; 'I am the light of the world.'"

Mr. Campbell says in *The New Theology* (p. 108):

"The Incarnation cannot be limited to one life only, however great that life may be. It is quite a false idea to think of Jesus

and no one else as the Son of God incarnate. It is easy to understand the loving reverence for Jesus which would lead men to regard Him as being and expressing something to which none of the rest of us can ever attain, but in affirming this we actually rob Him of a glory He ought to receive. We make Him unreal, reduce His earthly life to a sort of drama, and effect a drastic distinction in kind between Him and ourselves. If He came from the further side of the gulf, and we only from the hither ; if we are humanity without Divinity, and He Divinity that has only assumed humanity, perfect fellowship between Him and ourselves is impossible. But it is untrue to say that any such distinction exists."

It is true that he adds :

" Let us go on thinking of Jesus as Christ, the very Christ of glory, but let us realize that that same Christ is seeking expression through every human soul. He is incarnate in the race in order that by means of limitation He may manifest the innermost of God, the life and love eternal. To say this does not dethrone Jesus ; it lends significance to His life and work. He is on the throne, and the sceptre is in His hand. We can rise toward Him by trusting, loving, and serving Him ; and by so doing we shall demonstrate that we too are Christ the eternal Son."

But these words concerning Christ in glory do not modify the previous statements about Jesus. The man of Nazareth was only a man. Therefore, Mr. Campbell is able to say in the awful language before us :

" He is on the throne, and the sceptre is in His hand. We can rise toward Him by trusting, loving, and serving Him ; *and by so doing we shall demonstrate that we too are Christ the eternal Son.*"

Any man who could write such fearful words as are here italicized must have gone a very long way from the Scriptures of truth into the desert land of

rationalistic speculation, where only the wild fruits of unsanctified human reason grow.

What saith the Scriptures concerning those who Reject Jesus as the Divine Son of the Father. John the Baptist said:

'He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that believeth not on the Son of God shall not see life, but *the wrath of God abideth on him*' (John iii. 36).

And Jesus Himself declared:

'Neither doth the Father judge any man, but He hath given all judgment unto the Son; *that all may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which sent Him' (John v. 22, 23). 'Ye have not His word abiding in you: for whom He sent, Him ye believe not' (John v. 38). '*I am come down from heaven* not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me' (John vi. 38.) 'He said unto them, ye are from beneath, *I am from above:* ye are of this world, I am not of this world' (John viii. 23). 'He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day' (John xii. 48). 'There arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, *denying even the Master that bought them*, bringing upon themselves swift destruction' (2 Pet. ii. 1). 'Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father' (1 John ii. 23). 'Many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh' (2 John 7). '*Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God*' (2 John 9). 'If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book' (Rev. xxii. 19).

These very definite declarations are full of solemn warnings—warnings which are all directly addressed

to the rejectors of Jesus as the Saviour, 'the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' All such persons may well tremble and be afraid when they read them, for they are words of truth and judgment, and are certain to be fulfilled.

What the Scriptures testify concerning those who Accept Jesus as the Divine Son of the Father:

'Every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on Him, shall have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day' (John vi. 40). 'He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for He giveth not the Spirit by measure. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. *He that believeth on the Son hath* eternal life' (John iii. 34-36). 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My word he shall never see death' (John viii. 51). 'My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand' (John x. 27, 28). '*Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God*' (1 John iv. 15). 'And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?' (1 John v. 5). 'God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath the life' (1 John v. 11). 'These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God' (1 John v. 13). 'We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. *This is the true God and eternal life*' (1 John v. 20).

Let all those who have truly believed the Gospel of Christ and really accepted the Christ of the Gospel be comforted. Yea, more, let them rejoice and be glad. They are even now the possessors of true life—'the life indeed'—life eternal; 'and if children of God, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-

heirs with Christ.' 'All things are yours, for they are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' There is only one thing which is not the Christian's own—himself. He is not his own, but Christ's. Let him give himself unreservedly to his Lord, then he may be fully assured that all things are his—life and holiness, heaven and God.

4. *When the true Christology is understood and taught, it may remove from the minds of Jews their chief objection to Christianity.* All the sons and daughters of Abraham who have not become agnostics or atheists, but who still reverence the religion of their fathers, cling tenaciously to the doctrine of the Divine Unity. They are right in so doing, for was it not the Lord Himself—through Moses—who said to them, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord' (Deut. vi. 4; and Mark xii. 29).

This was a great declaration. It proclaimed the unity of God. But what sort of unity? In *Israel my glory* (p. 178), its lamented author, who was a good Hebrew scholar, has given us the following remarkable assurances:

'The Jew thinks of *Echad* (one) as an absolute, and not as a compound unity; whereas *yacheed* represents *an absolute unity*, which occurs only twelve times in the Old Testament, *and is never once used to express the unity of God.* On the contrary, Echad occurs several hundreds of times, and *always* represents a *compound unity*—like many grapes in one cluster. 'The Lord, our God, is one Lord' expresses Trinity in unity; for the Great Name is mentioned three times, as Jehovah, Elohenu, Jehovah; and then *echad* unites the Three in One."

When Christian missionaries go to the Jews with the Gospel, they are invariably met with the taunt

that they have three Gods, and that therefore Christianity cannot be true. Now the very first thing the missionary ought to do is frankly and rejoicingly to acknowledge the Divine unity. Jehovah was 'the one Lord' of the Old Testament dispensation, and Jesus is 'the one Lord' of the New. They are the same Person. Jesus claimed to be the great 'I AM' (John viii. 58). And who was He? 'And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM. . . . And thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations' (Exod. iii. 14, 15). The claim which He made was fully substantiated by the truths He taught, the life He lived, the character He manifested, the beneficent and miraculous works He performed, His numerous appearances after His resurrection, and His visible ascension into heaven. While these things are being explained by the Christian teacher, and urged upon the consideration of his Jewish auditors, let him not fail to point out that Jesus was Jehovah Incarnate—the Virgin-born Messiah promised unto the fathers (Isa. vii. 14, and Mic. v. 2). And if they insist—as they are almost certain to do—that in Christ's own teachings a Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost is proclaimed, and that consequently He could not be the Jehovah who instructed their fathers to understand that the only living and true God is 'one Lord'; two things ought to be said in reply: *first*, that the Trinity of Christ's Gospel was embodied in the Unity of Christ

Himself, for 'in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily' (Col. ii. 9); and *second*, that in the Unity of the Jehovah—the 'one Lord' of the Jewish dispensation—the Godhead were likewise embodied, as their own Old Testament Scriptures abundantly testify. Did not the Creator say, 'Let *Us* make man in *Our* image'? Are we not told that '*Jehovah* rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire *from Jehovah* out of heaven'? Is not the Old Testament Benediction a three-fold unity like that of the New? (Num. vi. 24-26, and 2 Cor. xiii. 14). In the second Psalm the Son is spoken of as saying of the Father, 'The Lord said unto Me, Thou art My Son: this day have I begotten Thee. . . . Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish in the way' (Ps. ii. 7, 12). The words of the 45th Psalm refer to the Son as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. i. 8, 9) testifies: 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of equity is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness: *therefore God, thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows*' (Ps. xlv. 6, 7). Is it not written in the 110th Psalm, that 'The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool'? And Isaiah wrote: 'Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and song; He also is become my salvation' (xii. 2). He said: 'Surely they are my people. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them; but they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit'

(lxiii. 8-10). *And surely the Holy Spirit is referred to in the following passages*: 'My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever' (Gen. vi. 3). 'Uphold me with Thy free Spirit' (Ps. li. 12). 'I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh' (Joel ii. 28, and Acts ii. 17). These and many other passages in the Bible prove to demonstration that in the Unity of the Lord God —the great 'I Am'—there was the same Trinity as in Jesus Christ. Let all this be fully declared and patiently explained to the heart-veiled children of Abraham, and their supreme objection to Christianity will not only be fairly met, but may also be finally removed. And now that current political events and the chronological prophecies of Scripture are unitedly declaring that Turkey under the weight of its own corruption is tottering to its fall; that the return of the Jews to Palestine is at hand, and indeed has already begun, and that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh; it is surely fitting that the glorious Gospel of Christ should now be offered to the Jews with more earnestness and urgency than ever before.

5. *When the true Christology of the Scriptures is rightly apprehended, some of the most difficult and enigmatical sayings of Christ will be comparatively easy to understand; and the awful dogma of Transubstantiation grounded upon them clearly seen to be a grossly ignorant and carnal misapprehension of the truth.* The Roman Catholic Church is founded upon this dogma, upon which the whole superstructure of popish claims and priestly pretensions has been reared. What is transubstantiation? It is the changing of ordinary bread and wine into the veritable body and

blood of the Lord. This change is effected by the priest, as multitudes of the people believe; or by the power of God in response to the prayers of the priest, as Roman Catholic theologians tell us. But, practically, it is the priest who effects the supposed transubstantiation, inasmuch as it takes place in answer to his petitions and not to those of any other person.

Now, what are the Scriptures upon which this pretension is based, and by which it is supposed to be warranted? They are as follows: 'I am the living bread, which came down out of heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: yea, and the bread which I give is My flesh, for the life of the world. The Jews strove one with another, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat? Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father; so he that eateth Me he also shall live because of Me.' 'This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers did eat and died: he that eateth this bread shall live for ever.' 'Many, therefore, of His disciples, when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?' (John vi. 51-60). Let the reader allow these words to make a full impression on his mind.

The language is very startling, and it is *not* metaphorical, as many Protestant theologians have weakly and mistakenly believed and taught. Jesus meant exactly what He said, and therefore—even when He recognized the fact that His words were offending many of His followers—instead of modifying the astonishing declarations He had made, He repeated them once and again, and with ever-increasing emphasis. The flesh and blood of which He spake were the flesh and blood of His body; they could be nothing else. And they were to be eaten and drunk. We accept all His words in their manifest sense and significance, and to the fullest extent of their meaning. But now we inquire, *How were His flesh and blood to be appropriated?* This is the point at which mistakes are made and errors have originated. The carnally minded hearers of Christ's words thought that He meant an actual *physical* eating and drinking of His flesh and blood—that it was a veritable cannibal feast to which He invited them. No wonder they exclaimed, 'How can this man give us His flesh to eat?' It was certain that they could not eat His flesh and drink His blood while He was alive; and equally certain that to do so after He had died could not possibly give to them 'eternal life.' 'He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, *hath eternal life.*' The interpretation they had put upon His words was a coarse, gross, and vulgar misapprehension, which ought to have been impossible to rational beings. Now, what did Jesus say to them? 'Doth this cause you to stumble? *What then if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where He*

was before?' These words ought to have been sufficient to correct their misunderstanding of His utterances, for how could they first eat His body and then afterwards see it ascend into heaven? But He further said for their enlightenment, 'It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life.' For the sake of clearness and simplicity, let us first consider what He says about His 'spirit' and 'words,' and then afterwards what He declares concerning His 'flesh.'

(1) '*It is the Spirit that quickeneth*'—or giveth life. Christ's mission on earth was to give life unto men: 'I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly' (John x. 10). And His *Gospel* was the medium and instrument through which His own spirit first of all, and then the Holy Ghost after His departure, would quicken true life in the dormant spirits of men: '*The words that I have spoken unto you, are spirit and are life.*' The new life thus quickened is the life of love—God's own life in the true believer—and therefore 'eternal.' But (2) '*the flesh profiteth nothing.*' Why? Because the *physical* eating, drinking, and digesting of the body and blood of Christ could neither quicken *spiritual* life in any human spirit, nor nourish and intensify that life where it was already possessed. Why then did Jesus insist so strongly and persistently on the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood, if their physical appropriation could profit nothing? Just because *their spiritual appropriation would profit everything.* We reach here the very core and

essence of this all-important matter. May the Holy Spirit help us to understand it clearly! When Christ became incarnate, 'He was made in the likeness of sinful *flesh*'; 'the Word became *flesh*, and dwelt among us.' The purpose of His incarnation was that He might give His flesh and shed His blood '*for the life of the world*.' He was made 'for a little while lower than the angels, *for the suffering of death*.' It was only by dying for the sins of the world that He could become the Saviour of humanity. His Gospel is a Gospel of salvation, 'through the blood of the cross.' Now, what do men do when they believe the 'words' of Christ, accept Christ Himself as their personal Saviour, and become the recipients of His 'spirit'? They intellectually and spiritually eat His flesh and drink His blood by recognizing the *purpose* of His Incarnation and Death, and by the believing appropriation of the redemptive *results* of His great Atoning Sacrifice. To accept Christ merely as a Teacher—however full of admiration and recipiency your discipleship may be—is not to eat His flesh and drink His blood. To think of Him merely as a Reformer, who died as a martyr to the truths He taught and the work He performed, is not to eat His flesh and drink His blood. 'Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the Antichrist' (1 John iv. 2, 3). All men need salvation: Christ is the only Saviour, and nothing less and nothing else than the receiving of Him as a Saviour can save any human being, and bring the life of God into his inmost nature. 'Except

ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life. The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life.' Jesus sought to uplift the thoughts of His hearers from the physical to the spiritual, but many of them refused to be uplifted, 'went back, and walked no more with Him.' How true it is that 'the mind of the flesh is death' (Rom. viii. 6)! Even after all the miracles they had seen and the wonderful words to which they had listened, they concluded that their own wisdom was greater than His. When Jesus appealed to the twelve apostles, and said, 'Would ye also go away?' Peter replied, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? *Thou hast the words of eternal life.*' This saying clearly proves that he understood, in large measure, his Master's teaching; and what he had apprehended his fellow-disciples had probably apprehended also. And afterwards, when they considered His words and talked one to another about them, and were, in all likelihood, still further instructed by their Master on the same great subject, their minds would be greatly enlightened regarding it. When, therefore, at the institution of the Supper (in the upper room, 'in the night in which He was betrayed') Jesus repeated the teaching which He had given them in the synagogue at Capernaum, they were all prepared to comprehend its meaning. This was what He said: 'And as they were eating (the Passover), Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and He gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body. And He took a cup,

and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins' (Matt. xxvi. 26-28). When He said concerning the bread, '*This is My body*,' and concerning the wine, '*This is My blood* of the covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins,' the disciples had no idea of any transubstantiation of the bread and wine into His flesh and blood. There is no hint of any such notion. And had they entertained, even for a moment, such a gross and carnal conception of His words, it would have been at once dispelled by what He immediately added, 'I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of *this fruit of the vine* until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom' (Matt. xxvi. 29, and Mark xiv. 25). The bread had not been changed into flesh, but was bread still; and the wine had not been changed into blood, but was wine still. All this is confirmed by what the glorified Saviour said to Paul regarding the Supper. '*I received of the Lord*,' says the apostle, 'that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, This is My body which is for you: this do in remembrance of Me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood: this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come. . . . He that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he

discern not the body' (1 Cor. xi. 23-29). Now, here again, there is no suggestion that the bread and wine had been changed into the body and blood of the Lord, for *after the Lord had given thanks* and had said, 'This My body,' it is added (*v.* 26), 'for as often as ye eat this *bread*,' etc. And then the words in Matthew xxvi. 29 must never be forgotten—words which the Saviour also uttered *after the giving of thanks:* 'I will not drink henceforth *of this fruit of the vine* until,' etc. The disciples saw in the bread broken and in the wine outpoured the symbols of His broken body and shed blood on the cross; and *recognizing* the redemptive purpose and results of that great representative and atoning Sacrifice, they spiritually made these results their own by personal and believing appropriation. Thus they '*discerned*' (not tasted) the Lord's body, ate of His flesh, drank His blood, and became the recipients of 'eternal life,' and of that living bread by which the new life must be daily fed and renewed.

Now, how does Roman Catholicism interpret the teachings of Jesus regarding the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood? Just as the foolish disciples did at Capernaum. It takes His words as signifying a *physical* eating and drinking of His actual flesh and blood. But in thinking of this strange and very astonishing view of this solemn matter, we are at once confronted with a question of the utmost importance—a question to which we would call the most serious attention of our readers. It is this: *Of which body of the Lord is it that the members of the Roman Church eat and drink?* It cannot be the

body which He had *as Creator,* and which Paul speaks of as '*the form of God*'; for the Catholic Church does not believe (any more than the Protestant Churches) that He had a body at all in His pre-Incarnate state. Neither can it be the glorified body which He possesses to-day in the heavens; for that body is spiritual and Divine. It was as true of Him as it is of all His followers, that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.' 'Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him *so* no more.' Our bodies, which are natural, must be made spiritual before they can be like His; therefore, says Paul, 'Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, *that it may be conformed to the body of His glory*' (Phil. iii. 21). And in another place: 'It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body' (1 Cor. xv. 44). The bread and wine of the so-called Mass, therefore, cannot be changed into the body and blood of the Lord *as He now is;* for His risen and glorified body is not flesh and blood. It must consequently be His Incarnate body of which they profess to partake—that body which lived upon the earth, and died on Calvary well-nigh two thousand years ago. Now, we never read in the New Testament that the apostles and disciples ate His flesh and drank His blood. Jesus Himself said —*after the giving of thanks*—'As often as ye eat this *bread*'; and, 'I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of *this fruit of the vine.*' The priest (there is no class-priesthood in the New Testament) professes

to do what Jesus Himself did not accomplish. Not only so, but while He said to His disciples, 'Take, eat'; 'Drink ye *all* of it,' the priest gives only the bread to the believer and reserves the wine for his own personal enjoyment. This, however, is a small matter for the Papacy to do, which boldly emasculates and corrupts the gospel; adds to and takes from the Word of God, where it permits it to be read at all; mutilates the ordinance of the Supper, and blasphemously sets up its supreme officer in the temple of God and accepts him as an infallible teacher and guide. Its sins against God and men are many and great; but surely one of the greatest of them all is its fearful profession of power to transubstantiate the common elements of bread and wine into the veritable body and blood of the Lord —a profession which is as utterly opposed to reason and common-sense as it is to Scripture. The *physical* eating and drinking of flesh and blood—even if it were of the flesh and blood of the Incarnate Saviour —could neither communicate *spiritual* life, nor nourish and develop that life when it has been received. Alas! alas! for all those who are trusting to such *bodily* eating and drinking for the obtaining of spiritual life and eternal salvation! Will not the awful words be again repeated by the Lord Himself in their hearing, '*The flesh profiteth nothing*'?

When Luther, with great courage and wisdom, threw behind his back many of the gross errors and degrading superstitions of Rome, he still, unfortunately, retained the belief that, somehow or other, the *body* of Christ is present in the sacrament of the

Supper. And out of this mistake there arose his discussion with Zwingli, which finally rent asunder the Protestant Church in Germany into what are now known as the Lutheran and Reformed sections, and mightily weakened the influence of the gospel in that country—*results which are the direct fruits of the false Christology which has descended from the great Councils in the days of the Fathers.*

6. *When the true Christology is generally believed and accepted, a new Theology will soon be given to the Church and the world—a theology far more simple, believable and practical than the old.* It has often been said that, while all the sciences have been progressing by leaps and bounds, the queen of them all has been almost standing still. There is no doubt a good deal of exaggeration in this statement, which is sometimes spoken with a sneer; and yet it contains far too much truth to permit us either to deny it or to remain contented with our theology as it is. When one reads the writings of the Fathers, and knows what they believed, it is surprising to find how many of their opinions continue to be reproduced even in the ablest theological works of the present day. We are almost impelled to exclaim, 'There is nothing new (in theology) under the sun!' and theology ought always to be new by being progressive. The Bible—though old and unchanging—is always new, because it is a Divine Revelation which continues, and shall continue for ever, to reveal; therefore Theology—which is the human interpretation of revelation—ought also to be clear, definite and progressive. Why then is it not any of

these, but misty, confused, and halting? Our reply is this: *A true, simple and progressive Theology is impossible, until a correct Christology has been attained*, for 'Neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.' It is only as men truly know Christ that they can really know God. Now, the current theology *in relation to the nature of Christ* is nothing less than a confused and perplexing metaphysical mystery. It produces in the minds of most people who thoughtfully ponder it an utter bewilderment concerning the Person of Christ, and leads many of them to give up the study of it altogether until theologians come to a measure of agreement among themselves and can produce something understandable. And, what is still worse, the consideration of the Christological Scriptures is also relinquished by many earnest Christians, under the conviction that they are too deep and mysterious to be apprehended by ordinary mortals. This is a great evil, which works a vast amount of mischief. Jesus said, 'I am the Truth,' and 'He that knoweth Me knoweth the Father'; but the result of a metaphysical theology, grounded upon a false and unscriptural Christology, has led to this in the case of multitudes—that they have ceased to pursue the knowledge of Christ's nature, and therefore remain to a large extent in unnecessary ignorance of God. When the Christology of Scripture comes to be rightly known, men will see the relationship of Christ to the Father on the one hand, and to themselves on the other, and clearly recognize that the great Creator and Redeemer is indeed and of

a truth the perfect Ideal Man, and 'the Altogether Lovely.' And not only will earnest and devout students of the Scriptures be immensely benefited by a truly simple, luminous and believable theology but multitudes of others also will thereby have their path cleared to the belief of the Bible as a Divinely inspired Revelation, and to the joyful acceptance of Christ as the great Mediator between God and man and the only Saviour of humanity.

Take Men of Science, for instance. The study of Nature ought to reveal to them the existence and operation of Deity, 'for the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity' (Rom. i. 20). But some, alas! fail to see God in His works; and if they do not become open and avowed atheists, they declare themselves to be agnostics—or know-nothings—in relation to God and the Hereafter. Now what does Jesus say?—'I and the Father are One'—'I know the Father'—'I have seen the Father'—'I came forth from God'—'The Father sent Me'—'He that knoweth the Son knoweth the Father also.' This is clear and simple testimony—a testimony which millions and millions of human beings, including many of the wisest and best who have ever lived, have believed and accepted with joyful gladness and with ennobling and most blissful results. But how do agnostics treat both Christ Himself and His testimony? The most of them (while ready to acknowledge that He was the wisest and noblest of mankind) practically give Him the

go-by as if He were utterly unworthy of notice, and remain agnostics still. They take the attitude towards Christ which was assumed by *John Stuart Mill*, who says in his *Three Essays on Theism* (p. 255): "Not even now could it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life." And yet he neither accepted Christ's teachings, nor believed in His works, nor received Him as a Saviour from personal sin, nor followed Him as a Master and Friend, nor endeavoured so to live the gospel that Christ might approve his life. This was his "Logic," applied to his own belief, character and conduct. But he was a philosopher! and therefore felt himself free, even while praising Christ, thus greatly to dishonour Him. And not a few, alas! have followed his example. It is a most illogical and unworthy attitude to assume, but not difficult to account for in measure. First of all, there is the natural enmity of the carnal mind and heart to God and everything spiritual (Rom. viii. 7). Then there is the slow *atrophy* of the higher powers of the mind, which naturally results from a steady and long-continued devotion to purely scientific pursuits, which Darwin not only experienced but also candidly acknowledged. There is also the subtle pride of intellect, which may consciously or unconsciously be engendered by large discoveries of the marvels of Nature—a pride which could hardly have been greater in some scientists had they *created* those marvels instead of merely *discovering* them.

But, along with all these hindrances to the acceptance of Christianity, there has also been *the unnatural and unnecessary mystery which theology has thrown around the Christ* — a mystery so great that He has hardly seemed to be human at all. It is true that He was and is the supreme Miracle and the great Exception, and as such eternally mysterious; but He was also one with us in all things—sin excepted—that we might enter into oneness with Him; and of all beings that ever trod the earth He was the most truly open and simple, humble and brotherly. Now, there are three things which ought to be persistently pressed upon the attention of agnostics—*first*, that God is the Great Unknown, as they themselves believe, and as Jesus testified; *second*, that the Son is the Revealer of the Father, and has truly made Him known to our race by Personal Manifestation from the beginning of time; and *third*, that to believe that He who was the *wisest* and *best* of men, and who, after being crucified, *rose from the dead* and *visibly ascended into the heavens*, could be either deceived or a deceiver, is altogether unreasonable. It is true that some men of science are agnostics in relation to these great and central facts of the Gospel, but very few have dared to deny them. We joyfully exclaim with Browning:

> "I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ,
> Accepted by the reason, solves for thee
> All questions on the earth, and out of it."

The poet's declaration is grandly true; ay! and

just as true of the deepest scientific and philosophic questions as of those which are strictly religious and Christian. Take two notable instances. In his excellent book *Can the Old Faith Live with the New?* (pp. 38-40) the *Rev. George Matheson, D.D.*, says:

"It is admitted by *Professor Huxley*, that to believe in the spontaneous generation of life is an act of *faith*. He himself professes to have that faith; but he candidly acknowledges that he has it in direct contradiction to all the facts of present experience—that if spontaneous generation ever happened, it must have occurred under conditions which no longer exist. . . . The amount of faith in the supernatural required for such a belief as this, is simply appalling; the man who can embrace it must have a special gift of faith. It is the acceptance of a doctrine which is confessedly contrary to all scientific experience, and avowedly opposed to all mental intuition; and, what renders the case more illogical still, it is the acceptance of a doctrine, which is pronouncedly supernatural with a view to avoid the supernaturalism of another which is far less pronounced than its own."

These are weighty and convincing words which ought to have impelled *Professor Huxley*—if he ever saw them—to reconsider his "act of philosophic faith." Spontaneous generation is absolutely unknown to science, and therefore, as an object of faith, has no foundation in Nature. Recognizing this as he did, had he humbly and devoutly repaired to the sacred Scriptures to be instructed as to the origin of life, what would they have told him? They would have told him this:—That the Son was the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation: 'for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible,

whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist' (Col. i. 15-17). *The Living One* was and is behind, above and below all the phenomena, laws and life of the universe; and to believe in Him is not only scientific and philosophic, but also thoroughly satisfying to the intellect and heart. The well by the wayside — ever ready to cool the brow and quench the thirst of the weary traveller—is supplied from the invisible fountain, hidden in the heart of the everlasting hills. The former may be taken as an emblem of the Son, and the latter as an emblem of the Father. Christ is like the well: for He stands by the wayside of life, and says to every gospel-hearer, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink'; and God is like the far-off mountain, in whose heart the stream of eternal life has its rise; 'for with Thee (O God) is the fountain of life' (Ps. xxxvi. 9). 'As the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself' (John v. 26). This is true of the Son as a Saviour, 'for He is our life' (Col. iii. 4); and it was equally true of Him in the beginning as a Creator, for 'without Him was not anything made that hath been made,' and 'IN HIM WAS LIFE' (John i. 3, 4). This, then, is one great question solved—

> "By the acknowledgment of God in Christ,
> Accepted by the reason."

The second instance is equally great and funda-

mental. In the same book (pp. 301-3) *Dr. Matheson* inquires:

"What is the doctrine of Evolution, as represented by *Mr. Herbert Spencer*, its most advanced and uncompromising advocate? It is this,—that the universe needs a transcendental Force or Power, for every movement of its existence, and for every process of its development. Let this doctrine be admitted, and the religious man will still find himself in the immediate presence of the great First Cause. He will feel that he is every instant face to face with a Power which is unsearchable, with a Force which is transcendental, with a Strength which is persistent, with a Mystery which is inscrutable; and that his own individual life is as really and as fully a product of this Mystery, as if in all the realm of nature there never had been any life but his own."

In these fine and forceful sentences, the perfect reasonableness of religious belief is clearly shown; and also the fact that science and philosophy naturally lead up to the recognition of a power which may most rationally be regarded as Personal and worshipped as Divine. But while *Herbert Spencer* freely acknowledged that the Power which is behind, under and within the universe, is omnipresent, operative and persistent, he still declared that that power is "inscrutable." Now, what do the Scriptures tell us about this primal, ever-present and ever-enduring "Power"? They tell us that the Power which Nature reveals is a Divine Power, and also that that Power is a Person. Nay more, they tell us that Nature herself—apart from the Bible—makes the same declaration; 'the invisible things of God since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made; *even His everlasting power and*

divinity' (Rom. i. 20). 'Power belongeth unto God' (Ps. lxii. 11); and all the power and wisdom of the Father have ever been and shall for ever be operative through the Son, who both in Creation and Redemption was, and is 'The power of God and the wisdom of God' (1 Cor. i. 24). 'Who was declared to be the Son of God, with power' (Rom. i. 14); Who said to His disciples before He ascended into heaven, 'All power hath been given unto Me, in heaven and on earth' (Matt. xxviii. 18); 'Who upholdeth all things by the word of His power' (Heb. i. 3). 'By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the Word (Logos) of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear' (Heb. xi. 2). And thus we find the solution of this great problem also—

> "By the acknowledgment of God in Christ,
> Accepted by the reason."

A Scriptural Christology and a true and simple Theology will do much to meet and overcome the prevailing scepticism of the world, and bring all men in grateful love and worshipful adoration to the feet of the great Redeemer and Exemplar to crown Him Lord of all. But we must here emphasize the fact, that all men of science are not agnostics. On the contrary, many of them—and these amongst the most eminent in knowledge and influence — are devout disciples and loyal-hearted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. In an address recently delivered in London, an eminent scientist (*Sir Wm. Dawson*) said:

"I have known three generations of scientific students, and I can honestly say that I have met as many really pious men amongst them as in the ordinary walks of professional life. The school of Huxley and Tyndal, I believe, is dying out. Romanes—their most distinguished confrère—became a Christian before his death. Few scientific men are agnostics, in the aggressive sense of the term."

We are not surprised to receive such testimony. All the facts discovered by science are not only marvellous in themselves, but they begin and end in mystery; and surely it is nothing less than irreverent and presumptuous folly to face such wonderful facts and stand in the presence of unfathomable mystery, and then question the existence of God. It is as true now as in the ancient days, 'The *fool* hath said in his heart, There is no God' (Ps. xiv. 1). As the author of *Stray Thoughts of a Life Time* (pp. 94, 95) truly and suggestively says:

"Scientists of the material plane know absolutely nothing of the ground and first causative principle of their own science. What a misnomer to call anything science, which occupies itself solely about *a mere parenthesis*, and fails to see either the beginning of phenomena or the end which they serve. But however great the distinction between the things which are seen and the underlying Reality, let us be thankful that their *appearance* is an index of *the Reality* which it hides."

And on pp. 1, 2:

"If the recognition of the Supreme Reality be not prior to our investigation of things, our whole procedure will be unphilosophical and our conclusions misleading. Let us begin every inquiry with the absolute conviction that *God is*, and is the latent Breath and potency in everything that exists; and let us always and always be possessed and controlled by this illuminating affection and thought. With the luminous element of

God's diffusive Personality in our mind and bosom, we may still err in many things, for our capacity is limited; but we shall not go far astray. The Supreme Presence in our souls will uphold us in the ascensive Way of Life; deliver us from self-will and self-seeking; and make us all aglow with the feeling that we are at home, calm and strong in the infinite resources of the Eternal."

Take also the Working Men of England, and consider their relation to popular Theology. Many people—who know very little about them—suppose that, taken as a whole, they are totally indifferent to religion, and actively hostile to its teachings and claims. But this is a big mistake. Thank God, there are thousands and hundreds of thousands of the working class who have accepted Christ as their Saviour, and who now belong to that noble brotherhood of the new life concerning whom Jesus said, 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' They are living day by day simple, useful, honest lives (for no worker in any sphere can take Christ as his Master and then scamp his work), and are adorning the Gospel of God their Saviour by an upright walk and conversation becoming that gospel. But while we rejoice in the fact, we are sorrowfully bound to acknowledge that a very large number of our working people are neither lovers nor servants of Christ. "'Tis true, 'tis pity; pity 'tis, 'tis true"; for in refusing to follow Him they turn away from their only Saviour and best Friend, who could save and help, prosper and bless them more effectively and permanently than any one else can. There are many reasons why they are as they are, two or three of which we may mention. Apart from the sinfulness of the human heart—

which is the root-reason of all infidelity and ungodliness—there are many other things which have kept them back from the receiving of Christ. For instance, they see that governments and parliaments largely composed of professing Christian men, and a House of Lords, of which the Bishops are members, make many laws which favour the rich rather than the poor. They also see that some of these laws throw a shield of protection over the liquor traffic—a traffic which has proved a fearful curse to them and to the nation generally—a traffic which year after year sends thousands of people to the drunkard's grave and the drunkard's doom. If the words have any meaning, 'Woe unto him who holdeth the bottle to his neighbour's head,' what must be said of governments which permit dram-shops to be opened by the thousands,—not in the West-ends of our great cities where the rich dwell, but in the East-ends where the poor huddle together in poverty and wretchedness, and who, alas! in the midst of their miseries are easily tempted to seek the temporary forgetfulness or alleviation which strong drink can give? The shame of it is great, and the sin terrible. Oh, for the embodiment in all our laws of that righteousness and true humanity, which alone exalteth a nation! And then, when working men turn to the *churches*, they believe that if they went to them in the best clothes they have they would neither be cordially welcomed nor receive the same courtesy and attention which the more "respectable" obtain. In this we believe they are in large measure mistaken, and yet no one, we imagine, will venture

to say that the strong words of the Apostle James are no longer needed:

'Brethren (ye) hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there come in also a poor man in vile clothing; and ye have regard to him that weareth the fine clothing, and say, Sit thou here in a good place: and ye say to the poor man, Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool; are ye not divided in your own mind, and become judges with evil thoughts?' (Jas. ii. 1-4).

But it is not the over-respectability and conventional class-feeling of the churches so much as their ecclesiastical officialism, which causes so many to stand aloof, and suspiciously regard them as the churches of men-made "priests" rather than the Church of the living God. Such persons may reason ignorantly and talk wildly at times about the churches, and yet their instincts and feelings regarding them may in large measure be right. Who can regard certain churches as they now exist, with their lofty claims, exclusive action and unholy rivalries as the Christ-created Church of the Brotherhood—a brotherhood to whom He said. 'One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren'—a brotherhood to whom He gave the new commandment, 'That ye love one another, even as I have loved you'—a brotherhood for whom He prayed, 'That they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me'? *If by a Divine fiat all the churches in Christendom were suddenly compelled to conform to their primitive apostolic models, what a tremendous transformation would be effected!* All the

humanly-created offices of pope and priest, prelate and archbishop, with their tiaras, mitres, thrones and palaces, and all the worldly pomp and paraphernalia of men-exalting ecclesiasticisms, would be utterly swept away into everlasting oblivion. And in their places would be seen in every Christian community only the humble bishop or bishops (also called 'elders' and 'presbyters') and the deacons—the former set apart 'to feed the flock of God,' and the latter to serve the Church chiefly, though not exclusively, in temporal things. The whole of the third chapter of Paul's first Epistle to Timothy refers to the officers of the apostolic churches, and it speaks only of the 'bishops' and 'deacons.' In his essay on *Bishop and Presbyter*, *Bishop Lightfoot* says: "It is a fact now generally recognized by theologians of all shades of opinion, that in the language of the New Testament the same officer in the church is called indifferently 'bishop' and 'elder' or 'presbyter.'" It is good to have such an admission from such an authority. And now we inquire: If Revelation was finished and the Gospel completed in the time of the apostles, *what reason is there for concluding that the organization of the Church also was not fully constituted according to the Divine purpose?* Is there any statement or even hint in Scripture that it was not so? And if not, then surely it was great presumption on the part of uninspired and fallible men to imagine, that the glorified Head of the Church had left such important matters as the appointment of its officers, and the form of its organization, to be determined by them?

"It is clear," says *Bishop Lightfoot*, "that at the close of the apostolic age the two lower orders of the threefold ministry were firmly and widely established; but traces of the third and highest order—the Episcopate so-called—are few and indistinct." Yes indeed! they are so few and indistinct that they are altogether invisible to those who seek for them without preconceived notions of their own. The Fathers chose to believe that up to the end of the apostolic age the Church was only a germ which required to be developed, and in the course of a few generations they managed to develop it into such an elaborate and portentous ecclesiasticism as would have filled the minds of Peter, James and John with utter amazement, and also, we doubt not, with profoundest grief.

Jerome says:

"Before factions were introduced into religion by the prompting of the devil, the churches were governed by a council of 'elders'; but as soon as each man began to consider those whom he baptized to belong to himself and not to Christ, it was decided throughout the world that one elected from among the elders should be placed over the rest, so that the care of the Church should devolve on him and the seeds of schism be removed."

Yes, it was thus that the first *Arch*-bishop was made, when "by the prompting of the devil" factions had been introduced into the churches, and bishops sought their own glory rather than that of Christ. By-and-bye, when it was seen that one Archbishop could neither care for all the churches nor remove the seeds of schism, others were created; and when these

in turn—like the bishops before them—began to disagree and introduce new factions into the churches another office was created, or rather ambitiously assumed, the occupant of which sought to govern them as they had governed the 'elders.' And thus went on from stage to stage the human development and fancied perfecting of the Church, until the fearfully *un*catholic system of *Roman* Catholicism was at length established in the city of the Cæsars and crowned—in the person of the pope—as the supreme government of the world. To this great 'tree of the knowledge of good and evil' multitudes of clean and unclean birds from age to age have come to roost; and under its far-spreading branches both the Church and the world have been overshadowed and darkened, corrupted and cursed for many generations.

In *Roman Catholic Claims* (p. 106) *Bishop Gore* says:

"No one can fairly contemplate the greatness of the papacy or consider how vast a position it occupies in the whole of history, without being satisfied that it is something greater than could ever have been created by the ambition or power of individual hopes or by the evil forces of injustice and fraud. It is one of those great historic growths which indicate a divine purpose latent in the tendencies of things and the circumstances of the world. . . . It is a natural development of circumstances, and it is in the fashioning of circumstances that we look for the hand of Providence."

This, surely, is an ill-balanced declaration! It attributes too much to "a Divine purpose latent in the tendencies of things," and fails to take sufficient account of the moral evil in the world which is always opposing the "Divine purpose" and corrupting "the tendencies of things." Every word of

the Bishop's statement is as true of the Turkish Empire as it is of the papacy. He speaks much more correctly on p. 110, where he says:

"When we come to look a little closer at the history of the Roman Church, it seems to us to have all the appearance, taking it in general, of a system, backed indeed by a divine intention, but perverted by something which is much more satanic than divine. . . . The certainly very undivine qualities of ambition, injustice and dishonesty, have been to a strange extent identified with the whole history of the papacy."

The late *Rev. Thomas Binney* was neither mistaken nor uncharitable when he declared, that "The papacy is the most awful spiritual and social despotism the world has ever seen." And its work is not yet ended, for as a dog waits for a bone from the hand of its master, many clergymen of the Anglican Church have waited at the door of the Vatican, with the expectant hope and prayer that the pope would confirm the validity of their Orders, and enable them with courage and confidence to play the *rôle* of priest either in the bosom of that Church which has been wont to call itself "The Bulwark of Protestantism," or in that of the Roman Catholic Church, to which they long to go. If they were honest and honourable men, they would go to the latter at once, whatever may be said about the validity of their Orders. With wonderful deference to fancied authority, and also, as we think, with amazing blindness and fatuity, *Mr. Gladstone* joined their company, and, as with his dying breath, and with many flattering titles, indirectly entreated "His Holiness Pope Leo XIII.," as "the first Bishop of Christendom," to acknow-

ledge "the validity of Anglican consecrations." We can perfectly understand how *Mr. Gladstone*, as an old Catholic (not a Roman Catholic), and as one who ardently desired the Reunion of Christendom, should do all he could to heal the divisions he deplored and bring about the unity for which he longed. This was entirely consistent with his sacerdotal idea of the Christian Church, and honouring to his Christian character. But knowing, as he did, what the papacy has been and is, and what a terrible record it has made for itself of tyranny and bloodshed, persecution and debasing superstition, it is astonishingly strange and unspeakably sad that he should ever have penned his "Plea for Anglo-Roman Unity." Fortunately the Plea came to nought, so far as its special purpose was concerned; for the pope's Commission and the pope himself declared that "*ordinations made according to the Anglican rite were and are absolutely null and utterly void.*" But the moral effect of the "Plea" will remain to bolster up the proud pretensions and uphold the lofty and absurd claims of a system which has been one of the world's greatest curses. Every pope, officially, is a great Misrepresentative of the lowly Christ and the fallible Peter (Matt. xvi. 23, Gal. ii. 11), and popery a terrible corrupter of Christianity, and the wholesale stupefier of the souls of men. Would to God that that "Plea" had never been written! Lord Salisbury also and his political party tried, and may try again, to put the children of the English people under the care of Anglican and Romish "priests" for religious instruction and training. We may yet

awake to the recognition of the awful fact, that the work of the Reformation has been practically undone, and that England is once more to a large extent a Roman Catholic country. The evangelical party in the Anglican Church ought to arise in the spirit of such men as Luther and Knox and resolutely resist such a calamity, but the most of its members seem to be like dumb dogs who either cannot or will not bark. Oh, England, England!—the land of light and liberty—the land of the open Bible and a freely-proclaimed Gospel—the land of power and progress—the land of reformers, martyrs and heroic defenders of the faith; the sun of your greatness and glory will soon decline towards its setting, if you foolishly permit your great men and the so-called national Church to lead you back into the arms of Rome, and place you again under the blighting and soul-withering influences of papal priestcraft. The Anglo-Roman Unity for which many long and pray is a delusion and a snare—a unity of uniformity and tyranny—a unity of papal supremacy and priestly power—a unity which may glorify the pope and mightily aggrandise the paganized church over which he rules with an authority which claims to be infallible, but a unity also which will shut the Bible and open the Catechism, corrupt the Gospel and weaken the ministry, erect the altar and establish the Confessional, destroy the fruits of civil and religious liberty, and woefully hinder the progress and happiness of mankind. Wherever popery prevails a dense darkness rests upon the nations, under which ungodliness and superstition, infidelity and ignorance

abound. We have only to look abroad upon the world at this very hour to see that it is so. The English people are far too unsuspicious of the subtle schemes and persistent efforts of Romanism. In the great day of the Lord's appearing, all world-corrupted, state-controlled and men-exalting ecclesiasticisms shall be taken away according to His own word, 'Every plant which My heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up' (Matt. xv. 13); and thus shall room be made for both the King and His Kingdom, when the true believers in all churches shall be gathered into one great Fraternity—a Fraternity whose manifest spirituality and humility, purity and simplicity, activity and beneficence shall woo and win the world, and instrumentally bring all mankind into conscious and blissful union with the Father, through the mediation of the Son, and by the power of the Holy Ghost.

But that glorious day is not yet; and therefore we must come back to the present time, look at things as they are, and fulfil the duties of the passing hour. And in doing so, it is surely a hopeful and encouraging sign of the times that our working people, as a whole, are much more hostile to clerics and churches than they are to Christ and Christianity.

One night a gentleman asked a gathering of working men in London this question, "Why do you dislike the parsons as a class, when you do not dislike their Master?" "They are not up to sample," was the prompt reply. "And why do you care so little for the churches?" he further inquired; and immediately the answer was given, "Because they care so

little for us." Thank God, that is much less true to-day than it used to be; for in connection with almost every church of every denomination there is a mission of some kind to carry the Gospel to all the people in the neighbourhood. There are many, many Christians who have received enough of the Spirit of Christ to make them genial and gracious, tender and gentle, loving and kind, and of whose influence and action it may be truly said:

> "They pluck a thorn from every breast,
> And plant a blossom there."

The Salvation Army is also doing a giant's work on behalf of the poor and neglected. Many large congregations in all our cities and towns are almost entirely composed of working people, and no healthier or more active churches are in existence. The people generally are coming to recognize the fact that genuine Christian pastors, to whatever church they may belong, are their truest friends; and churches of all denominations are slowly apprehending the practical significance of Christ's words, 'To the poor the Gospel is preached.' Better days are at hand. But along with these various hindrances there is also this—that Christ has been greatly misrepresented to working men, as to others, *by the high-and-dry theology of the past*. It has put Him before them as an august and mysterious Being, who, though He descended from heaven to earth to live and die for humanity, was yet so great and wonderful that He seems to be not only 'separate from sinners,' but also far away from men. And what are the conse-

quences? They have almost given up the reading of Theology altogether, and only think of Christ as a supernatural Mystery belonging to another world. From the very beginning of time the delights of the Divine Man have always been with the sons of men; and in return, the delights of the sons of men ought always to have been with their Creator and Redeemer, who ever was and is the Beauty of God. But alas! sin darkened their intellects, corrupted their hearts, and turned their affections and desires towards the beggarly and unsatisfying elements of a perishing world; and a false and mystifying Christology has put Christ so far away from men that they see but little beauty in Him that they should desire Him. And yet how near He has come to us, ay, even to the lowliest of mankind! *Think of Jesus Christ.* He was not born in a palace, but in a stable. He was not cradled on a couch of gold, but in a manger. He was not brought up in Jerusalem among the rich and great, but in the despised village of Nazareth, and in the home of a carpenter. And when at length He came forth from His lowly obscurity and began His public ministry, He did not choose scribes and Pharisees to be His disciples, but humble fishermen of Galilee. He did not appear as the representative of any class in the nation, but was emphatically *the Man of the people*—'the Friend of publicans and sinners'—the Instructor of the ignorant—the Healer of the sick—the Comforter of the sorrowful—the Benefactor of all. His life has been truly and beautifully summed up in these words—'Who went about doing good.' He daily mingled

with the multitudes as one of themselves, and always acted towards them all in the kindest, humblest, and most brotherly fashion—so much so, indeed, that while the representative men of the nation followed Him wherever He went with bitter hatred and scornful sneers, 'the people heard Him gladly.' But now all this is reversed. The scribes and Pharisees of the twentieth century praise and honour Him, while hundreds of thousands of the so-called working classes will not hear Him at all, at least from those who regard themselves as His fully accredited ambassadors. There is something radically wrong somewhere; and we fear that class-priesthoods and a hard metaphysical theology must bear a large portion of the blame. Let theology be simplified and *humanized*—by finding God in Christ the God-Man—and let the Gospel be preached to the great masses—not by so-called "priests," with their absurd and unscriptural pretensions; nor by the clergy as a class proudly claiming to be successors of the apostles; nor by narrow-minded sectarists who put their little isms on the forehead of the Gospel; but by Christlike men and women, who are true-hearted to God, loyal-hearted to Christ, warm-hearted to all their fellow-Christians, and tender-hearted to all their fellow-men—especially the worst—and then we shall no longer require to say or sing the profoundly pathetic and heart-stirring words of Ebenezer Elliott:

"When wilt Thou save the people?
O God of mercy, when?
The people, Lord, the people,
Not thrones and crowns, but men!

God save the people—Thine they are,
Thy children, as Thine angels fair;
From vice, oppression, and despair,
God save the people. Amen."

To this fervent and prayerful appeal a Divine response is given in the sacred Scriptures:

When will you save the people?
O Christians! tell Me when?
Christ died for all the people;
Not thrones and crowns, but men!
Go, take His gospel everywhere,
My Spirit all your work shall share;
And soon from sin and all despair,
We shall save the people.

Believers cry: 'Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days' (Isa. li. 9); and God replies: 'Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion' (Isa. lii. 1). 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation' (Isa. lii. 7). Believers pray, 'Thy kingdom come'; and Christ answers, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature' (Mark xvi. 15). 'Occupy till I come' (Luke xix. 13). 'Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me; to give every man *according as his work shall be*' (Rev. xxii. 12).

7. *The true Christology, believed and taught by theologians and preachers, will be powerfully and practically effective in securing widespread Christian service and manifold spiritual results.* We could make this clearly evident by the right interpretation of many

Christological Scriptures, but we shall confine our remarks to *one passage only*, which may properly be regarded as the most noteworthy of them all. We refer to Philippians ii. 5-8: 'Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being originally in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.' The one general lesson usually drawn from these wonderful words *is that of humility*. *Bishop Lightfoot* says:

"Reflect in your own minds the mind of Christ Jesus: be humble, as He also was humble."

But they teach a far greater and grander lesson than that when the real nature of Christ is truly apprehended, viz., this, *That we ought to manifest humility* AS HE MANIFESTED IT, *when He became Incarnate.* Had the Incarnation been a descent of the Divine Son into humanity—God becoming Man—as is generally believed, it could not have been imitated by Christians except by the cherishing and manifesting of the spirit of humility; but it was the coming down of the Divine Man into 'flesh'; and that was a descent *which can be literally followed* by every true believer in the Saviour. Consider the matter. A Christian is *a spiritual man;* he has 'passed from death unto life' (John v. 24). The life which Jesus came to give has been quickened within him, and that life is the life of God. Having received the

Divine life, and become 'a partaker of the Divine nature,' and a possessor of the Divine Spirit, he is able to do just what Christ did—*to descend from the spiritual plane of human life into the flesh-and-blood condition of his unsaved brethren*, and by *incarnating* himself in their low estate—through fellowship, sympathy, and service—to 'seek and save the lost.' He is to walk in the downward path of sorrow and suffering until he reaches the Calvary of a voluntary and perfect sacrifice of self (1 John iii. 16), from whence he too will ascend, as Christ did, to the throne of honour and glory, there to become an eternal partaker of His reward and joy: 'Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high' (Heb. xii. 2). 'If we suffer with Him, we shall also be glorified together' (Rom. viii. 17).

"In vain the *name* of Christ we bear,
Unless the *cross* of Christ we share;
The path that leads us to the skies
Demands Love's perfect sacrifice."

'He that doth not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it' (Matt. x. 38, 39). It is still true that "the way of the cross is the road to the crown." Incarnation and crucifixion lead to resurrection, ascension and glorification to all the faithful followers of Christ, even as they did to Christ Himself. 'This is the way, walk ye in it'—'Follow Me,' are His great and

gracious commands—commands which are being loyally obeyed by multitudes of those who trust and love Him. The self-emptying path is now being trodden by thousands and thousands of consecrated men and women all over Christendom; and the number, we believe, will be greatly increased when God's sublime appeal in Philippians ii. 5-8 is rightly understood by His people. They have often listened to entreaties to become '*crucified* with Christ,' to rise with Him into the *Resurrection* life, and to live the life of *Ascension* by seeking the things which are above where Christ is; but, rightly understood, this is the most powerful appeal of all—an appeal which includes all the others—an appeal which is at once tenderly pathetic and thoroughly practical—an appeal which is yet destined, we trust, to thrill and inspire, and nerve with holy courage and enthusiasm the hearts of millions—'*Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus*.' In our homes and churches, villages and towns, cities and counties, the manifestation of the Christ-spirit in active well-doing is greatly needed. Although our country is Christian in measure, it is not yet Christianised. Its evils are manifold, and its miseries abound. Let our patriotism be filled with the spirit of the gospel. Let every social wrong be righted and every hindrance to the chariot of true progress taken out of its path. Away with all State establishments of religion, which greatly dishonour the Headship of Christ over His own Church, and mightily hinder the union and unity of Christians. Away with all men-made priesthoods, which have no sanction in the

New Testament; and also with the figment of a mechanically-perpetuated apostolical succession, which makes even the Holy Ghost the slave of its proud and exclusive pretensions. This strong statement is amply justified by the claims and declarations of the would-be successors of the apostles. In *Roman Catholic Claims* (p. 30) *Bishop Gore* says:

"It is the sacramental principle, that the spiritual is imparted (since the Incarnation) through the material. This inward life depends on outward means. Without baptism, without 'the laying on of hands,' *which gives the gift of the Holy Ghost in His personal indwelling*," *etc.*

How mistaken! Away with all dogmatic *creeds* which fallible men have formulated—creeds which tend to hinder inquiry, satisfy the mind with a merely intellectual knowledge of the gospel, and lead to divisions, alienations and antagonisms: let them be used as finger-posts on the road to inquiry, but never as exhaustive and all-encircling statements of truth. Let all *isms* too, if they cannot be wholly set aside, be always subordinated to the principle of love, and never allowed to hinder an open fellowship in worship and communion and hearty co-operation in every good work. Down with the ecclesiastical churches of men, and up with the truly spiritual Church of Jesus Christ—the Church of the believing Brotherhood—the family of the regenerated and the twice-born. And, when thus our country has been purified in heart, *let it also be purified in head.* May all its Laws be made truly Christian—righteous, impartial and good. In time to come may we also see to it

that none of our law-makers are impure and ungodly men. And when the laws of our country are righteous, may the nation resolve that they shall be righteously *administered*, and that no favouritism or partiality shall be shown to any class or person in the land. Let the liquor traffic—which is the fontal source of ten thousand evils and miseries—be no longer favoured and protected by the State, but put into the hands of the people to licence or limit as their folly or wisdom may direct. And let vice and crime, gambling and impurity, and all the other social ills and moral evils which are directly connected with, or are fostered by, that awful and ungodly traffic, be sternly denounced by public opinion and steadily repressed by the strong hand of the law.

> "Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
> A virtuous populace shall rise the while,
> And stand a wall of fire around
> Our much-loved isle."

But the sympathies and efforts of Christians must not be limited to their native land; their sphere of action is the world. "The world for Christ" ought to be the motto on every gospel banner. 'We will rejoice in Thy salvation, O Lord, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners'—banners which must be carried by the conquering host to the uttermost ends of the earth, and planted on the high places of every land. What is the condition of the world to-day? It is almost as true now as when John the Beloved wrote his Epistles, that 'the whole world lieth in the evil one.' *Look at*

Christendom. Beneath the superficial veneer of its boasted and boastful civilization there is a perfect hell of vice and crime, selfishness and sensuality, greed and jealousy, tyranny and cruelty—a hell for which civilization itself is constantly providing the fuel. The inventions of art, the discoveries of science and the riches acquired by successful commerce, are all being largely used in preparing for the infernal arbitrament of the battlefield—more largely and directly used, indeed, in providing engines of human destruction than in ministering to the highest well-being and the truest happiness of mankind. And if this, with any measure of truth, can be said of those countries upon which the sunlight of gospel truth has more or less brightly shone for centuries, *what can we say of the great realm of Heathendom* but this, that its numerous peoples still sit in darkness and under the shadow of death far from God and true happiness.

Ah! how much the poor, mad world—sinning, sorrowing and suffering—still stands in need of Christlike Christians, who in the spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion shall spend their days as He spent His, in seeking and saving the lost! Oh for the coronation of love in all our hearts and homes and churches, and the manifestation of a real brotherhood by all true believers and loyal followers of the Saviour! Oh for the descent, in answer to united and persistent prayer, of another Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Ghost, that, as in the days of the apostles, the Church might once more go forth into the world girt with zeal, clothed with courage, and filled with spiritual power to proclaim the gospel 'to every

creature,' and bring the nations of mankind to the feet of Jesus to be saved and sanctified by the mighty influences of His grace and love.

> "The great occasion never ends,
> While sorrow's cry to God ascends,
> And Love transforms life's rugged way
> Into a new Thermopylæ."

Through her splendid Missionary Societies the Church has done much in the past, and may do still more—far more—in the immediate future; but our chief hope for humanity is not centred on any of her efforts or achievements, but on Christ Himself —"the Christ that is to be." We are looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour—Jesus Christ. The day of the Lord is at hand. When the government of Turkey sinks under the weight of its own corruption, and the Empire itself falls into the hands of Europe or Russia, Palestine, under British influence, will be set free for the occupation of the Jews, many of whom have recently returned to the land of their fathers. 'Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish (Britain?) first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver aad their gold with them.' '*There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer*, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.' 'If the fall of the Jews has been the uplifting of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness!' 'What shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?' Through their

agency 'the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.' 'The heathen shall be given unto Him for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.' 'He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.' 'Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him,' 'Men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed.' 'Let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen.' 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'

NOTES

NOTE A (P. 22)

THE FALL

THERE are many references in the Scriptures to the fact of the Fall, the following passages being proof: Gen. iii. 1-6; Job xxxi. 33; Hos. vi. 6, 7; Rom. v. 12-14; 1 Cor. xv. 45-47. The entire *Revelation* of God is addressed to a sinful race, whose sins and sinfulness are traceable to a Fall; and on its human side the great work of *Redemption* is also grounded on the Fall, because the moral lapse from incipient holiness into wilful disobedience and wrong-doing, made a Divine Redemption necessary.

Dr. Maclaren's words concerning the Fall and its effects, are those of truth and soberness. They are reverent and profound, convincing and scriptural, and stand in striking contrast to those of the Rev. R. J. Campbell in *The New Theology* (pp. 59, 60), which may be fairly characterized as irreverent and superficial, unscriptural and untrue.

"The doctrine of the Fall implies a view of the nature and dealings of God with men, which is unethical and untrue. Surely, God knew beforehand that the world would go wrong, the

blame for the catastrophe was not all man's. If He were so baffled and horror-stricken by the results as the dogmatic theologian makes out, He ought to have been more careful about the way He did His work at the beginning; a world which went wrong so early and so easily was anything but 'very good,' although He pronounced it to be so, according to the Genesis writer. Besides, why should a trivial act of transgression have sent it all wrong? We take leave of our common sense when we talk

> 'Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree.'

To be sure, Milton did not believe himself when he wrote these lines, but his Puritan associates and Catholic ancestors did, and orthodoxy professes to do still, though it does not know quite how to put it without falling into absurdity. Again, why should God feel Himself so much aggrieved by Adam's peccadillo? If it were not for the theological atmosphere which surrounds the question, we should see at once that it was ridiculous."

Such flippant and dogmatic language as this is surely fitted to shock and distress every devout mind, and impel him to conclude that we have here of a truth a teaching which is neither intellectually wise nor spiritually helpful.

NOTE B (p. 65)

The Reason why the 'I Am' never appeared to the People of Israel

The Lord appeared in glory to seventy of the elders of the people on the slope of the mount (Exod. xxiv. 9); *but He never appeared to the people themselves.* Why was this? The reason seems to be

suggested in these words: 'Take ye, therefore, good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of *form* on the day that the Lord spake to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: *lest ye corrupt yourselves and make you a graven image in the form of a figure*,' etc. (Deut. iv. 15, 16). But for their strong tendency to idolatry, the Lord might often have appeared to the whole congregation, as well as to elect representatives of their race. But they were permitted to behold only the *symbols* of His presence, in the great glory—'fire' which burned on Mount Sinai and in 'the pillar of cloud' which went before them in all their wilderness wanderings.

NOTE C (p. 72)

The Visible God of the Old Testament

In *An Outline of Christian Theology* (p. 162), Dr. W. N. Clarke says:

"Before Christ, *God was manifested* in the relation that He bore to the Hebrew people, and in this relation much of what is fundamental in the knowledge of God came to light. The manifestation of God before Christ was such that by means of it men might know—and some men did know—the living God of all, near, holy and merciful. *The God thus manifested* was one in every sense, no internal distinctions being attributed to Him, and *no clear distinctions in the realm of* MANIFESTATION *being found.*" [The italics are ours.]

This deliverance is vague and unsatisfactory; indeed, it is altogether mistaken. "*Before Christ, God was manifested.*" It is the Father who is thus

spoken of. Where, when, and how was *He manifested?* Was it He who partook of food at Mamre, and who appeared to Moses as the great 'I Am' at the burning bush, and who afterwards (during the long period of forty years) frequently visited him in human form, and spoke to him 'face to face as a man with his friend'? To answer these questions it is not necessary to do more than quote the following words: '*No man hath seen God at any time,* the only-begotten *Son,* who is in the bosom of the Father, *He hath declared Him.*' Again, our author tells us that, "The God thus *manifested* was one in every sense, no internal distinctions being attributed to Him, *and no clear distinctions in the realm of manifestation being found.*" How wonderful! If "no clear distinctions in the realm of *manifestation* were found," how, then, could He have been manifested? A person manifested in any circumstances whatsoever must surely have had external distinctions of some sort, more or less clear. When ideas are mistaken, how naturally they express themselves enigmatically! The God of Israel, who was so frequently seen and communed with in the patriarchal age, had many manifest distinctions which were clearly apprehended by those who saw Him. If Dr. Clarke refers to "manifestations" which were not *personal,* in what did they consist, and in what respects were they revelations of God the Father?

NOTE D (p. 177)

The Person of the Christ

In *The Seat of Authority in Religion* (pp. 716, 717, fifth edition), the late Dr. James Martineau has written:

"As I look back on the foregoing discussions, a conclusion is forced upon me on which I cannot dwell without pain and dismay, viz., that Christianity, as defined or understood in all the churches which formulate it, has been mainly evolved from what is transient and perishable in its sources, from what is unhistorical in its traditions, mythological in its preconceptions, and misapprehended in the oracles of its prophets. From the fable in Eden to the imagination of the last trumpet, the whole story of the Divine order of the world is dislocated and deformed. The blight of birth-sin, with its involuntary perdition; the scheme of expiatory redemption, with its vicarious salvation; the incarnation, with its low postulates of the relation between God and man, and its unworkable doctrine of two natures in one person; the official transmission of grace, through material elements in the keeping of a consecrated corporation; the second coming of Christ, to summon the dead and part the sheep from the goats at the general judgment. All are the growth of a mythical literature, or Messianic dreams, or Pharisaic theology, or sacramental superstition, or popular apotheosis."

What a tremendous declaration we have here! It is critical, dogmatic, and fearfully destructive. It breathes over all the old theologies and creeds, and also, alas! over Divine revelation itself, with all its redemptive facts and doctrines, as a blighting east wind might pass over 'the garden of the Lord,' withering the flowers and blossoms in spring or wasting its beautiful and precious fruits in autumn. We stand

appalled in contemplating its possible ravages, and think with profound sadness of soul of the great spiritual impoverishment which must necessarily come to all persons who are foolish enough to believe its terrible assertions.

And still worse is to follow, for in the last two pages of his book our author states with perfect plainness his final convictions concerning the person and character of Jesus Christ.

"Religion is the right attitude of the finite soul to the Infinite, the straining of the vision from within the shadows to the far-off Light, the devotion of goodness still immature and precarious towards the Perfect and Eternal: and no Mediator can help us here but One 'who, being touched with the feeling of our infirmities, is tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin.' Even this condition, 'without sin,' is not to be pressed out of its relative significance for every growing mind, into a rigid dogmatic absolutism. It tells simply the impression of His life upon its witnesses, without contradicting the self-judgment which felt hurt by the epithet, 'Good.' Nay, this very susceptibility to possible repentance and consciousness of something short of 'Good,' rather lifts Him for us nearer to the standard of holiness than detains Him in the precincts of sin. It is only in the sphere of mundane phenomena that a Revealer needs to *know more* than we. In the sphere of Divine things the requirement is, that He *be better*, and in the order of His affections and the secrets of His will, make more approach to the supreme Perfection. This intervening position it is which alone renders the function of a Mediator, Uplifter, Inspirer possible; and *that* not *instead of immediate* revelation, but simply as making us more aware of it and helping us to interpret it. For in the very constitution of the human soul, there is provision for an immediate apprehension of God. But often in the transient lights and shades of conscience, we pass on and 'Know not *who* it is,' and not till we see in another the victory which shames our own defeat, and are caught up by enthusiasm for some realized heroism or sanctity, do the authority of right

and the beauty of holiness come home to us as an appeal literally Divine. The train of the conspicuously righteous, in their several degrees, are for us the real angels that pass to and fro on the ladder that reaches from earth to heaven. And if Jesus of Nazareth, in virtue of the characteristics of His spirit, holds the place of Prince of Saints and perfects the conditions of the pure religious life, He thereby reveals the highest possibilities of the human soul and their dependence on habitual communion between man and God."

Having seen in the preceding pages of our work what are the teachings of the Scriptures concerning the Person of the Christ, in His Pre-incarnate, Incarnate, and glorified states; and also the testimony of Christ Himself regarding His nature in these three different conditions, we are able to estimate, with some measure of correctness, the worth, or worthlessness, of Dr. Martineau's conclusions in the above extraordinary passage. 'The only-begotten of the Father' is here brought down to the level of our common humanity, although he is readily acknowledged to be the wisest and best of our race—"*The Prince of Saints*." 'The Holy One of God' is not merely only human, but also *sinful*, in measure, as the following appalling language plainly implies: "Even this condition '*without sin*' is not to be pressed out of its relative significance for every growing mind, into a rigid dogmatic absolutism. *It tells simply the impression of His life upon its witnesses, without contradicting the self-judgment which felt* HURT *by the epithet*, 'GOOD.'" And the only and all-sufficient Saviour of sinners (Acts iv. 12 and Heb. vii. 25) is shown to be one who needed a Saviour for Himself: "Nay, this very *susceptibility to possible repentance and*

consciousness of something short of '*Good*,' rather lifts Him for us nearer to the standard of holiness than detains Him in the precincts of sin." In other words, it is better for us that Jesus was only an *imperfect example*, though great in virtue and goodness, than that He should have been the Divine Son of the Father, and the God-appointed Saviour of sinners. Such teaching as this reminds us of the words of Jesus Himself: 'Which of you convicteth me of sin?' (John viii. 46). And again: 'Neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him' (Matt. xi. 27). And John says: 'Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; he that confesseth the Son, hath the Father also' (1 John ii. 23). 'Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If anyone cometh unto you and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting; for he that giveth him greeting, partaketh in his evil works' (2 John 9-11).

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